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DAD--I'M SCARED. WHAT IF ALL THOSE SIGNS ARE RIGHT --ABOUT THE RADIATION, I MEAN?
THE FIRST FOLKS HERE USED GEIGER COUNTERS, AND THEY DIDN'T DETECT ANYTHING, ROY.
IF IT'S... SOMETHING ELSE THAT SCARES YOU-- WELL, WE'LL JUST WATCH THE PROCEEDINGS FROM RIGHT HERE!
KID'S PROBABLY SCARED--LIKE ALL OF US--THAT MAYBE DOOMSDAY HIMSELF IS GONNA POP OUTTA THAT HOLE!
DON'T KNOW HOW HE AFFECTED YOUR LIVES, BUT I SAW OLD "ROCK-FACE" UP CLOSE, AND I HAVEN'T SLEPT TOO WELL SINCE!
HE TRASHED MY HOUSE, AND THREATENED MY MOM AND BABY SISTER, BUT HE DID WORSE TO THE JUSTICE LEAGUE.*
'COURSE THOSE SUPER-TYPES ARE USED TO STUFF LIKE THAT. PEOPLE LIKE US WET OUR PANTS AT THE SIGHT OF REAL MONSTERS.
*IT HAPPENED IN JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #69!
Ahh, WELL--IT'S TIME TO PAY MY RESPECTS!
STEP ASIDE, COMING THROUGH, COMING THROUGH!
WELL, HEY! WHERE DO YA THINK YER GOIN', PUNK?
WHAT THE--?

WE LOST OUR FAMILY BUSINESS TO DOOMSDAY'S DESTRUCTION YOUNG MAN!
THAT'S RIGHT. AND WE STAKED OUT THIS SPOT HOURS AGO!
YOU KIDS THINK YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU PLEASE, DON'T YOU?
GEEZ--!
WHO DO YOU THINK ORGANIZED THIS LITTLE CROWD-SCENE?
WE DIDN'T MEAN TO COME DOWN SO HARD ON YOU, BOY, IT'S JUST THAT...
YOU-- YOU'RE MITCH?
YEAH, YEAH, FORGET IT.
LISTEN UP, PEOPLE--MY NAME IS MITCH, AND I INVITED YOU HERE BECAUSE, I GUESS, WE ALL SHARE ONE THING IN COMMON...
...NAMELY, DOOMSDAY, AND THE PATH OF DESTRUCTION HE/IT CAUSED UNTIL SUPERMAN STOPPED EVERYTHING COLD IN METROPOLIS!
THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TO SUPERMAN, BUT NOBODY KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TO US.
LET'S TALK ABOUT IT--SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES--TRY TO MAKE SOME SENSE OF WHAT SCREWED UP OUR HAPPY LITTLE LIVES!
I-I LOST MY DEAR HUSBAND ROLAND...
...MY CHILDREN LOST THEIR FATHER WHEN THAT --THING-- DESTROYED HIS TRUCK!*
*IN MAN OF STEEL #18

ME? I SAW MEN I WORKED FOR YEARS WITH --BUDDIES--DIE BECAUSE OF DOOMSDAY.*
*IN MAN OF STEEL #19
YEAH, I HEAR YOU. I NEVER THOUGHT MUCH OF SUPERMAN, Y'KNOW?
WELL, THE DAY HE SAVED MY MOM AND MY BABY SISTER, I BECAME HIS BIGGEST FAN--
--NOT COUNTING A GUY NAMED BIBBO I MET ONCE!
I KNOW WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE SEARCHING FOR MEANING, BUT I'VE BEEN DYING TO DO THIS SINCE I GOT HERE.
=UGHN= TAKE THIS, DOOMSDAY!
THAT'S IT-- LET'S FILL THIS SUCKER UP!
CEASE THIS ACTIVITY NOW!

THIS IS A RADIO-ACTIVE SITE UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY.
YOU ARE ALL IN DANGER OF EXPOSURE. VACATE THE PREMISES--NOW.
THIS IS A FREE COUNTRY, GOON, AND I DON'T BUY YOUR RADIATION STORY NEITHER! WHERE'S YOUR I.D.?
YEAH--LIKE THE KID SAID--WE GOT RIGHTS!
GET BACK INTO YOUR CARS AND LEAVE, OR YOU WILL BE PROSECUTED TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW.
PROSECUTE THIS, YOU BUNCH OF--
THROW EVEN ONE STONE, AND THIS THING WILL GET UGLY!
THERE ARE DANGERS LURKING HERE, BUT NO ANSWERS.
THAT'S WHAT YOU ALL CAME FOR, ISN'T IT? NOT FOR A FIGHT WITH SOLDIERS JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS, BUT FOR SOME UNDERSTANDING?
PUT DOWN THOSE ROCKS AND FOLLOW ME TO A SPOT OUTSIDE THE CYCLONE FENCE, WHERE THEIR JURISDICTION ENDS.
SUPERMAN! YOU CRUISE THE INTERNET? COOL!

OUR ORDERS WERE TO SCATTER THE CROWD.
I'LL SETTLE. I'M NOT FIGHTING HIM.
AND SO...
"WHAT IS DOOMSDAY, AND WHERE DID HE COME FROM?" THAT'S A STORY I LEARNED MYSELF ONLY RECENTLY. *
DOOMSDAY WAS GENETICALLY BRED TO BE THE PERFECT LIVING ORGANISM--ABLE TO ADAPT TO ANY THREAT--ANY OBSTACLE.
HE SEEMED TO "HOME IN" ON ME DURING OUR FIRST FIGHT AND I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY...
...UNTIL I FOUND OUT ITS CREATOR HAD USED MY HOME PLANET AS HIS "PETRI DISH!" DOOMSDAY WAS "BORN" ON KRYPTON!
SO YOU WERE LIKE A BIG THREAT TO HIM JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A KRYPTONIAN?
SOMETHING LIKE THAT, MITCH.
WE SHARE A BOND IN FEAR. I USED MINE TO MOTIVATE ME TO FACE DOOMSDAY AGAIN, AND YOU FOLKS OVERCAME YOURS TO COME HERE.
THERE'S NO SHAME IN IT--EVEN BEINGS WHO CALL THEMSELVES GODS, LEARNED TO FEAR THE NAME OF DOOMSDAY...
*AS SEEN IN SUPERMAN-DOOMSDAY, NOW IN TRADE PAPERBACK!

245,000 YEARS AGO.
THE BOOM TUBE HAS DELIVERED US TO THE VERY FRINGES OF BYLAN 5, MY LORD!
YOUR ORDERS?
BOOM!
BAH! ORDERS ARE USELESS ON A DAY AS BLACK AS THIS, UNCLE STEPPENWOLF!
TODAY, I MUST WED THIS BACKWARD PLANET'S PRINCESS!
OF WHAT USE ARE MY ORDERS... WHEN MY MOTHER ORDERS ME TO DO THIS?
MASTER MAYHEM AND I UNDERSTAND YOUR... RELUCTANCE TO MARRY THE GIRL, NEPHEW--
--BUT YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!
SHOWDOWN
CHAPTER ONE BY:
DAN JURGENS- STORY AND LAYOUT
BRETT BREEDING INKER
NEW GODS CREATED BY JACK KIRBY

BYLAN 5 HAS VAST DEPOSITS OF AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL CHEMICAL THAT APOKOLIPS DESPERATELY NEEDS FOR ITS WEAPONS FACTORIES!
YOUR MOTHER ARRANGED THIS MARRIAGE IN ORDER TO GAIN CONTROL OF THOSE DEPOSITS!
I AM WELL AWARE OF THAT, STEPPEN-WOLF! I WOULD RATHER GAIN THE CHEMICAL DEPOSITS--
--BY LAUNCHING A FULL-SCALE ATTACK AND CONQUERING THE WORTHLESS ROCK!
UNFORTUNATELY, SUCH AN ATTACK WOULD DESTROY THE DEPOSITS! --EVEN MORE SO THAN WOULD ONE OF OUR BOOM TUBES.
INDEED, SO I AM FORCED TO MARRY THE WENCH!
OF COURSE, SHOULD I HAPPEN TO BECOME WIDOWED IN A MATTER OF DAYS...
HA HA HA HAAA!
THE PLANET HAS CLEARED YOUR SHUTTLE FOR LANDING, MY LORD!
REMEMBER TO OBSERVE THE PROPER RULES OF PROTOCOL, DARKSEID. YOU'RE YOUNG, IMPETUOUS, BRASH--
STILL YOUR TONGUE, UNCLE. NO ONE TALKS TO ME THAT WAY!
COME!

HE COMES, FATHER! HOW COULD YOU CONDEMN ME TO SUCH A FATE?

AS *SHAPER* OF THIS WORLD, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ITS LIVES, KARREEV.
HAD I NOT PLEDGED YOU TO DARKSEID--
--THE GODS OF APOKOLIPS WOULD SURELY HAVE ANNIHILATED US ALL!
FORGIVE ME, FATHER, BUT YOU ARE A *FOOL* IF YOU THINK THIS WEDDING BORN IN *HELL*--

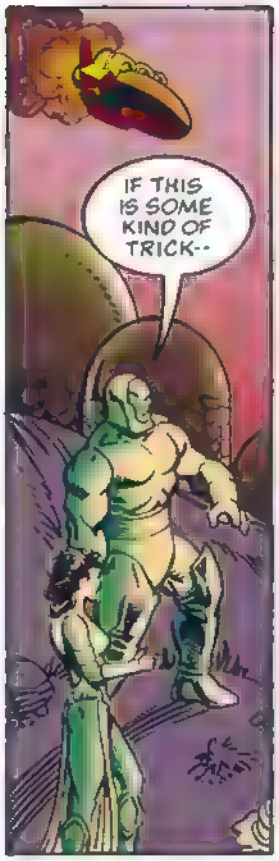
--CAN POSSIBLY SAVE US!
LOOK AT HIM, HE IS DISGUSTING!
I HAVE COME.
POMPOUS, TOO.
KARREEV! STILL YOUR TONGUE! THESE ARE NO MORTAL MEN!

AH, BEAUTIFUL KARREEV. IT IS GOOD TO MEET YOU AT LAST.
SPARE ME YOUR CONDESCENDING TONE, DARKSEID! WE BOTH KNOW THIS IS ABOUT OUR CHEMICAL DEPOSITS!
CAREFUL, WENCH! OR I'LL TAKE THESE CHEMICALS AND LEAVE YOU ALL TO CHEW ON YOUR OWN ENTRAILS!

P-PLEASE! YOU WILL ADDRESS MY DAUGHTER WITH RESPECT, OR--
STILL YOUR TONGUE LEST YOU LOSE IT, LOWLY!
SINCE ALL YOU WANT IS OUR CHEMICALS YOU SHOULD REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT THEM, DARK ONE.

IT IS THEIR VERY VOLATILITY THAT MAKES THEM USEFUL TO YOU. BUT THE CHEMICALS REACH SUCH A DANGEROUS LEVEL AT THIS TIME OF YEAR--
--THAT THEIR EXPOSURE TO AIR CAN CAUSE A CHAIN REACTION IN THE ATMOSPHERE!
I KNOW ALL THIS WELL, WOMAN! LET US CONTINUE AND GET THIS OVER WITH!

THAT SIREN--?!
ANOTHER SHIP APPROACHES!


IF THIS IS SOME KIND OF TRICK--

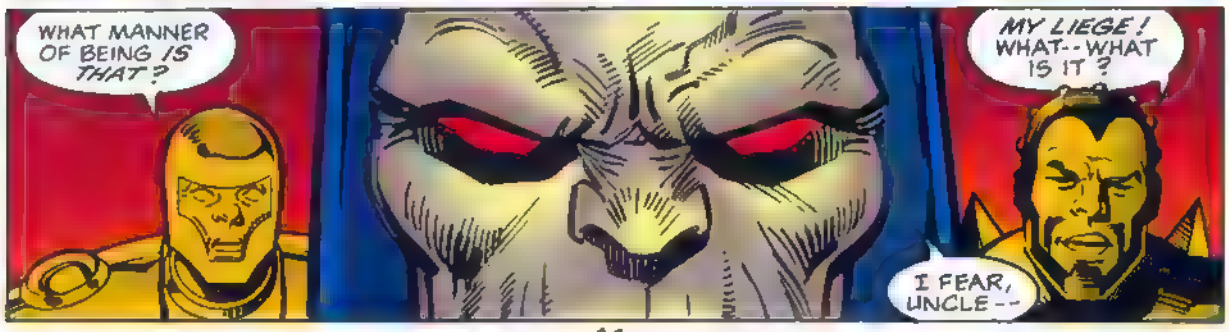
NO TRICK! I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A VESSEL--
--BUT I SENSE THE PRESENCE OF DEATH ABOUT IT!

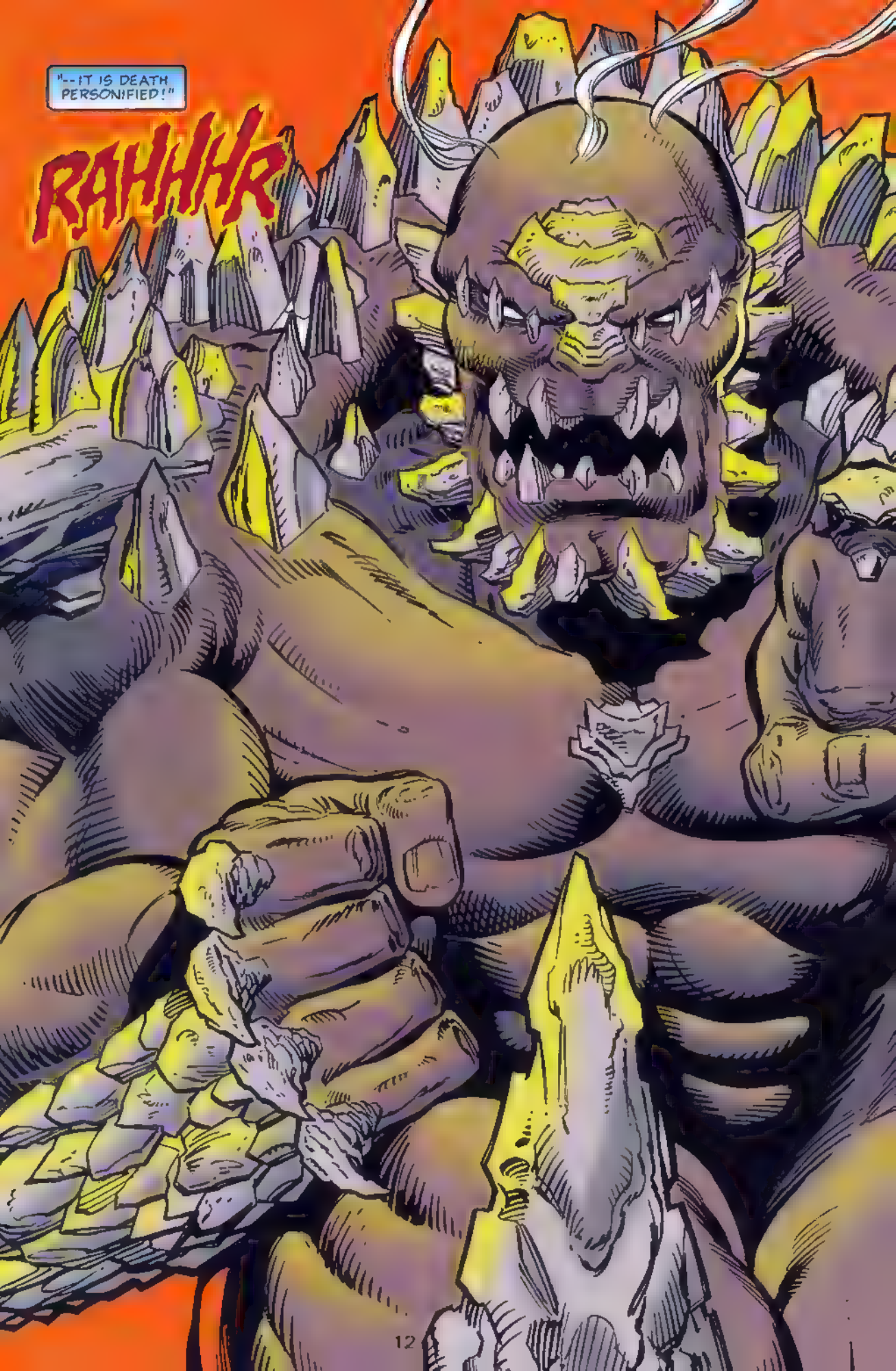
THE SHIP CAREENS TOWARD THEM, ALL SENSE OF CONTROL OBVIOUSLY LOST.

THE IMPACT IS VIOLENT.
ALL REALIZE NO OCCUPANT COULD POSSIBLY SURVIVE.

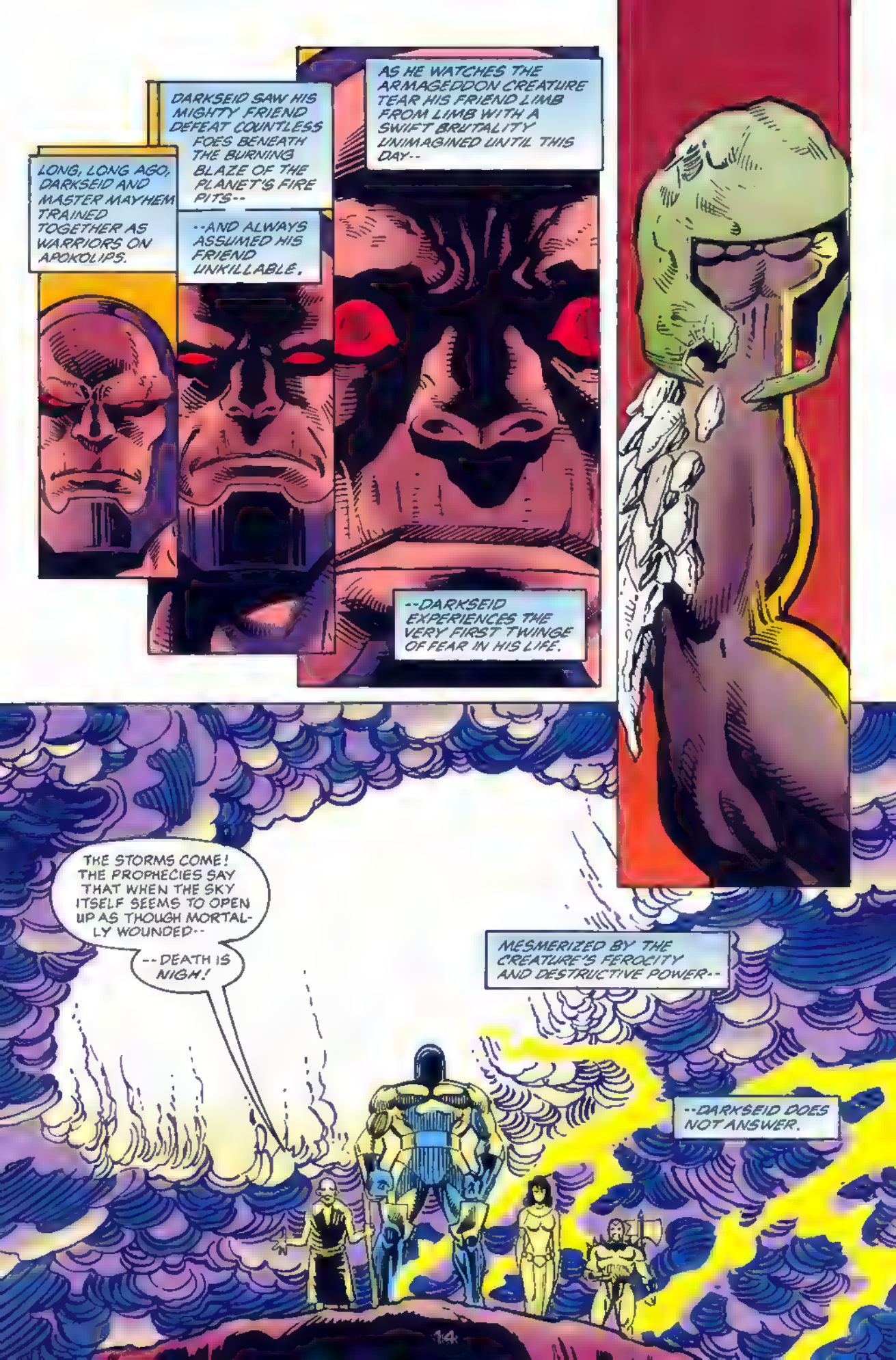
AS THE SMOKE CLEARS, HOWEVER--

--IT BECOMES CLEAR ONE MAN... ONE CREATURE...DID SURVIVE.


WHAT MANNER OF BEING IS THAT?
MY LIEGE! WHAT--WHAT IS IT?
I FEAR, UNCLE--


"--IT IS DEATH PERSONIFIED!"
RAHHHR

TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW OF THIS, SHAPER! PUT YOUR POWERS TO WORK!
AS YOU KNOW... I CAN SEE PAST MY BLINDNESS--
--INTO THE VERY NATURE OF A MAN!
JUST AS I KNOW YOUR HEART TO BE EVIL--
--SO DO I KNOW THIS CREATURE TO BE A MONSTER WITHOUT A HEART!
HE HAS JOURNEYED A LONG WAY--
--FROM A PLACE CALLED KRYPTON--
--WHERE HE WAS CREATED AS A TORTURED SOUL!
HE IS THE ARMAGEDDON COME ALIVE--
--THE MURDER OF MILLIONS... THE END OF US ALL!
NO! BEFORE THIS ARMAGEDDON CREATURE CAN FEAST ON ME, HE WILL TASTE HIS OWN DEATH!
KILL HIM, MAYHEM.


LONG, LONG AGO, DARKSEID AND MASTER MAYHEM TRAINED TOGETHER AS WARRIORS ON APOKOLIPS.
DARKSEID SAW HIS MIGHTY FRIEND DEFEAT COUNTLESS FOES BENEATH THE BURNING BLAZE OF THE PLANET'S FIRE PITS--
--AND ALWAYS ASSUMED HIS FRIEND UNKILLABLE.
AS HE WATCHES THE ARMAGEDDON CREATURE TEAR HIS FRIEND LIMB FROM LIMB WITH A SWIFT BRUTALITY UNIMAGINED UNTIL THIS DAY--
--DARKSEID EXPERIENCES THE VERY FIRST TWINGE OF FEAR IN HIS LIFE.
THE STORMS COME! THE PROPHECIES SAY THAT WHEN THE SKY ITSELF SEEMS TO OPEN UP AS THOUGH MORTALLY WOUNDED--
--DEATH IS NIGH!
MESMERIZED BY THE CREATURE'S FEROCITY AND DESTRUCTIVE POWER--
--DARKSEID DOES NOT ANSWER.

IT ONLY TAKES MINUTES FOR THE CREATURE'S MINDLESS RAMPAGE TO CARRY HIM TO THE CHEMICAL MINES.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE INTERFERES WITH DARKSEID'S PLANS.
SOMETHING NO ONE DOES.
HOLD.
ARGH!

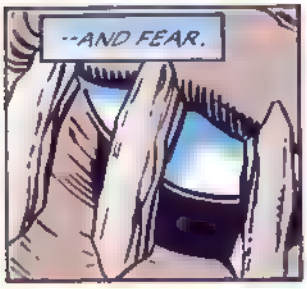
CAREFUL, NEPHEW! MY SISTER IS NOT PREPARED TO LOSE YOU YET!
STAND ASIDE! I'LL GRIND THIS CREATURE'S BONES TO POWDER BEFORE THIS DAY IS OUT!
YOUR OMEGA BEAMS! USE THEM!
NO! HONOR DEMANDS HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT!
I'LL BEST THIS BEAST WITH MY FISTS--
--OR DIE TRYING!
TURN, CREATURE!
AS A CHEMICAL CHAIN REACTION RIPS THE ATMOSPHERE APART AND CREATES GASES TOXIC TO ALL INHABITANTS--
--A STORM OF A DIFFERENT SORT BEGINS TO BREW.
RRAHHR!

REALIZING THAT WHEN THIS BATTLE IS FOUGHT--

--ONLY ONE WILL WALK AWAY--

--THE OPPONENTS STUDY EACH OTHER WITH GREAT CARE.

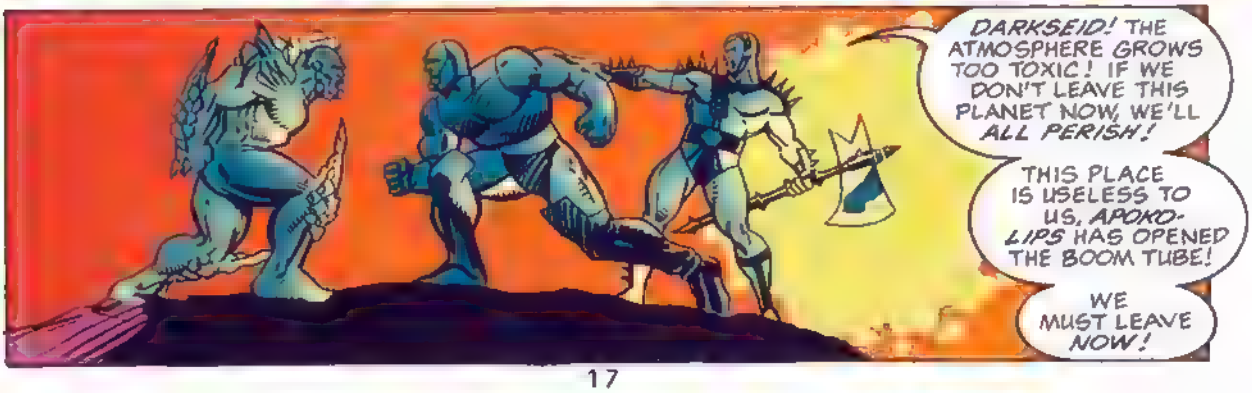
IT'S A SEARCH FOR WEAKNESS--

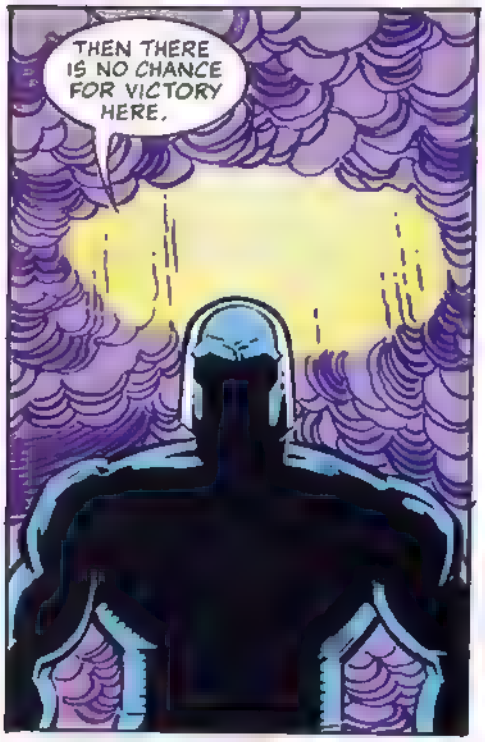

--AND FEAR.

IT'S ALSO A WASTE OF TIME.

ONLY ONE WORD CAN DESCRIBE WHAT IS TO COME.

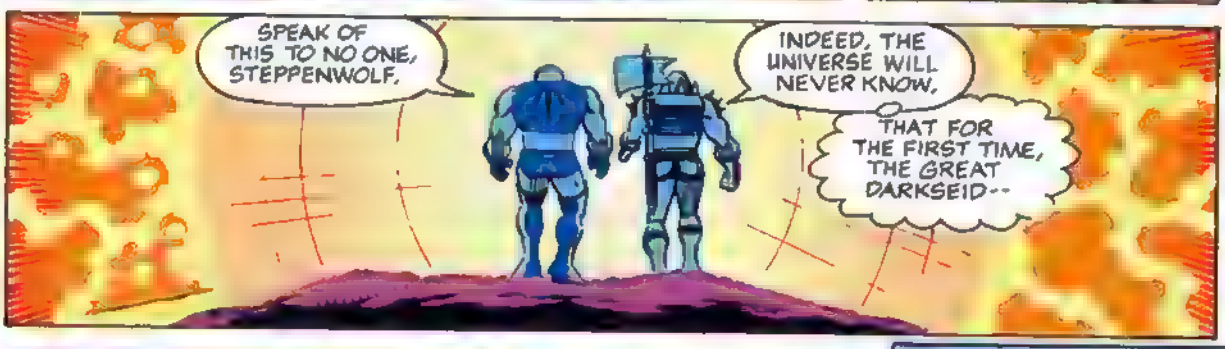
WAR.


DARKSEID! THE ATMOSPHERE GROWS TOO TOXIC! IF WE DON'T LEAVE THIS PLANET NOW, WE'LL ALL PERISH!
THIS PLACE IS USELESS TO US, APOKOLIPS HAS OPENED THE BOOM TUBE!
WE MUST LEAVE NOW!


THEN THERE IS NO CHANCE FOR VICTORY HERE.

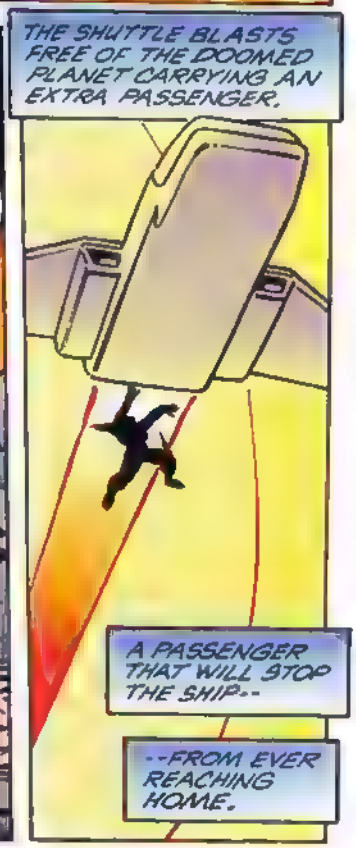
A SHAME WE WILL NEVER HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY--

--TO MEET AGAIN.


SPEAK OF THIS TO NO ONE, STEPPENWOLF.
INDEED, THE UNIVERSE WILL NEVER KNOW.
THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE GREAT DARKSEID--

"--TURNED HIS BACK ON AN OPPONENT."
THEY--THEY LEFT WITHOUT US!
AND EVERY LIVING SOUL ON THIS MUD BALL IS GONNA BE DEAD IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES!

INITIATE LAUNCH! WE'RE LEAVING!
HURRY! THAT--THING IS COMING!


THE SHUTTLE BLASTS FREE OF THE DOOMED PLANET CARRYING AN EXTRA PASSENGER.
A PASSENGER THAT WILL STOP THE SHIP--
--FROM EVER REACHING HOME.

KHUNDIA.
WROOOOOOM!
THE GOAL OF THIS COMBAT IS TO CEREMONIALLY AVENGE A SERIES OF INSULTS BETWEEN THE DOMINANT HOUSES OF EBON AND KRIMSN.
THE OBJECT OF ALL KHUNDIAN COMBAT IS TO DESTROY THE OPPOSITION.
THE PRIZE IS VINDICATION--THE LOSING HOUSE FORFEITS TO THE WINNERS ONE HALF OF ITS POSSESSIONS.
I HOPE YOU HAVE BEEN SHRIVEN, GROMMARK, FOR SOON YOU WILL MEET THE DEMON MOTHER.
KOBALD, BLACK LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF EBON OPENS... AS IS HIS RIGHT.
THE MOTHER WILL REJECT YOUR BLACK SOUL, KOBALD.
SHE DOES NOT WELCOME LOSERS.
"RED GROMMARK OF KRIMSN CATCHES AND RETURNS--
"--GOOD SHOT!"
LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

A PITY ALL WERE FORCED TO SURRENDER OUR WEAPONS AT THE GATE!
WE COULD CONCLUDE THIS BUSINESS BETWEEN US HERE IN THE STANDS.
THE BLACKS ARE DOWN TWO WARRIORS! THE REDS SURGE AHEAD!
OUR RED ARMY SECRETLY WAITS OUTSIDE TO DISPUTE THE RESULT SHOULD WE LOSE.
THE BLACKS WILL ALSO DISPUTE ANY LOSS. WE WILL HAVE OUR CHANCE TO FIGHT...
"...SOON ENOUGH--"
KAHOOM!
LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!
A WEAPON! WHOSE IS IT?
NOT OURS--

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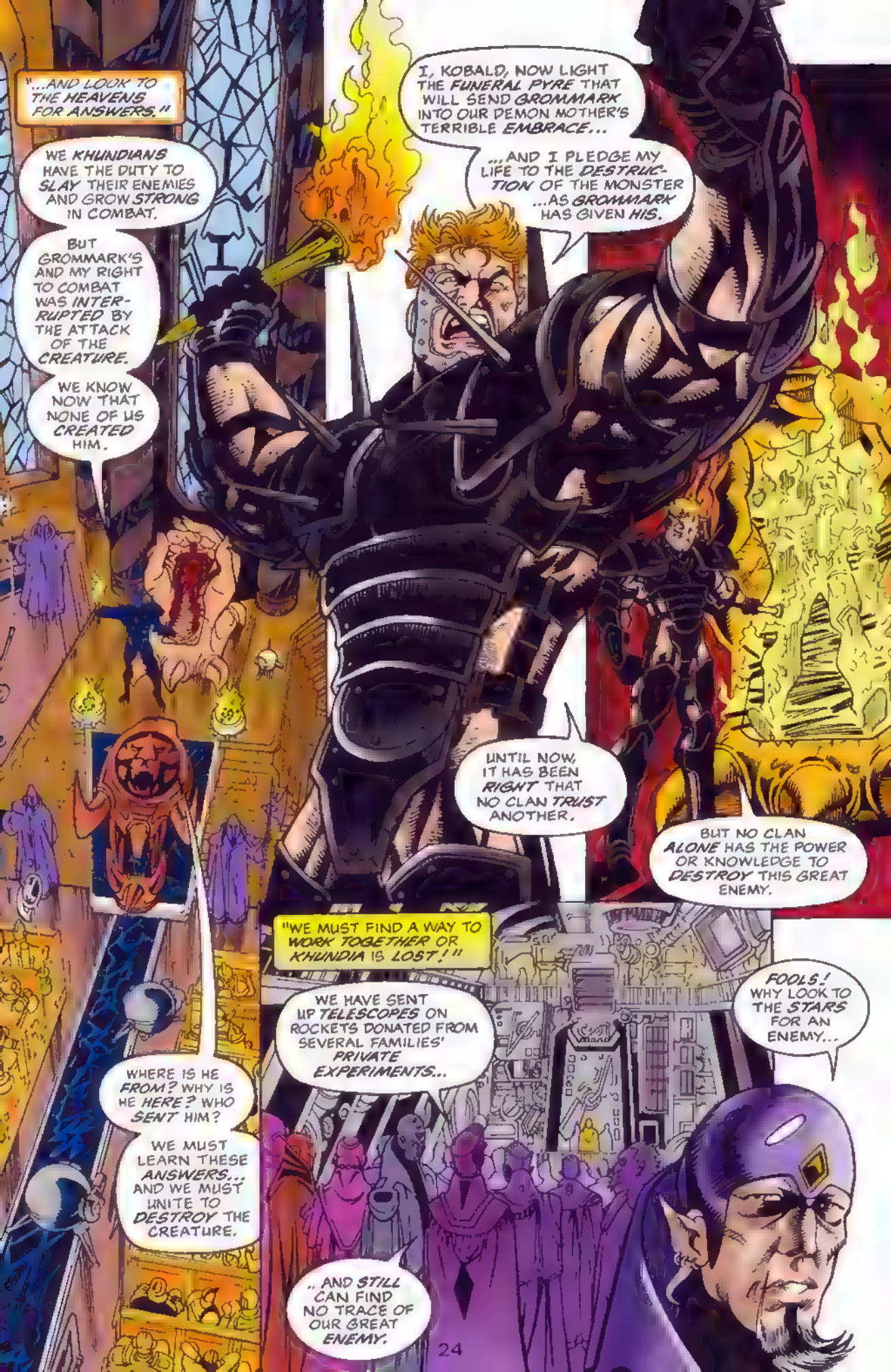
"...SOON ENOUGH..."
LOOK UP IN THE SKY!
A WEAPON! WHOSE IS IT?
NOT OURS
KOBALD, LOOK AT THIS! SOME SECRET WEAPON OF THE REDS?
CHAPTER TWO
STORY
LOUISE SIMONSON
PENCILLER
CHRIS BATISTA
INKER
JOHN NYBERG

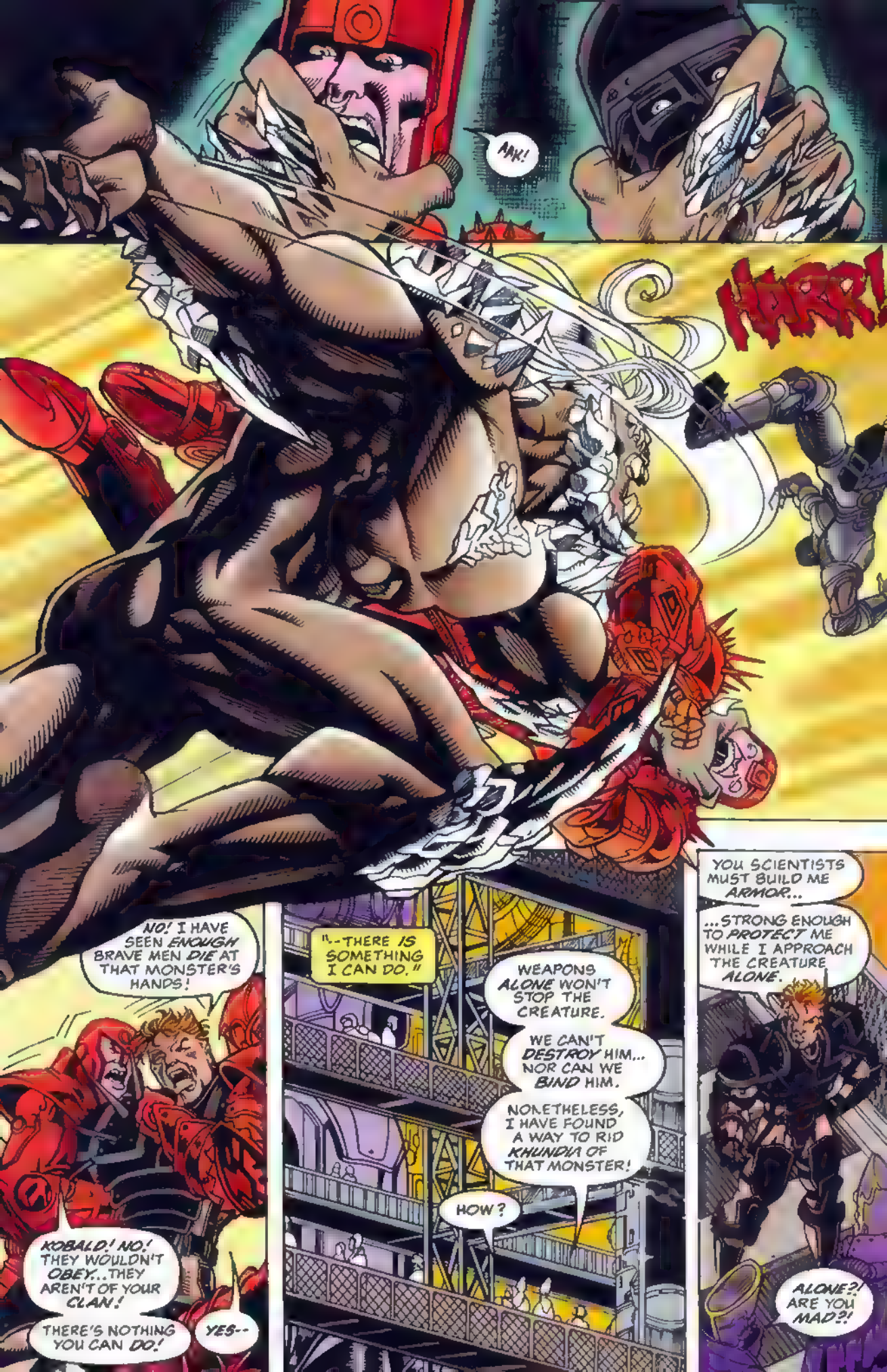
SOME SAY IN FIRE
CHAPTER TWO
STORY- LOUISE SIMONSON
PENCILLER- CHRIS BATISTA
INKER- JOHN NYBERG
KOBALD, LOOK AT IT! IS IT SOME SECRET WEAPON OF THE REDS?

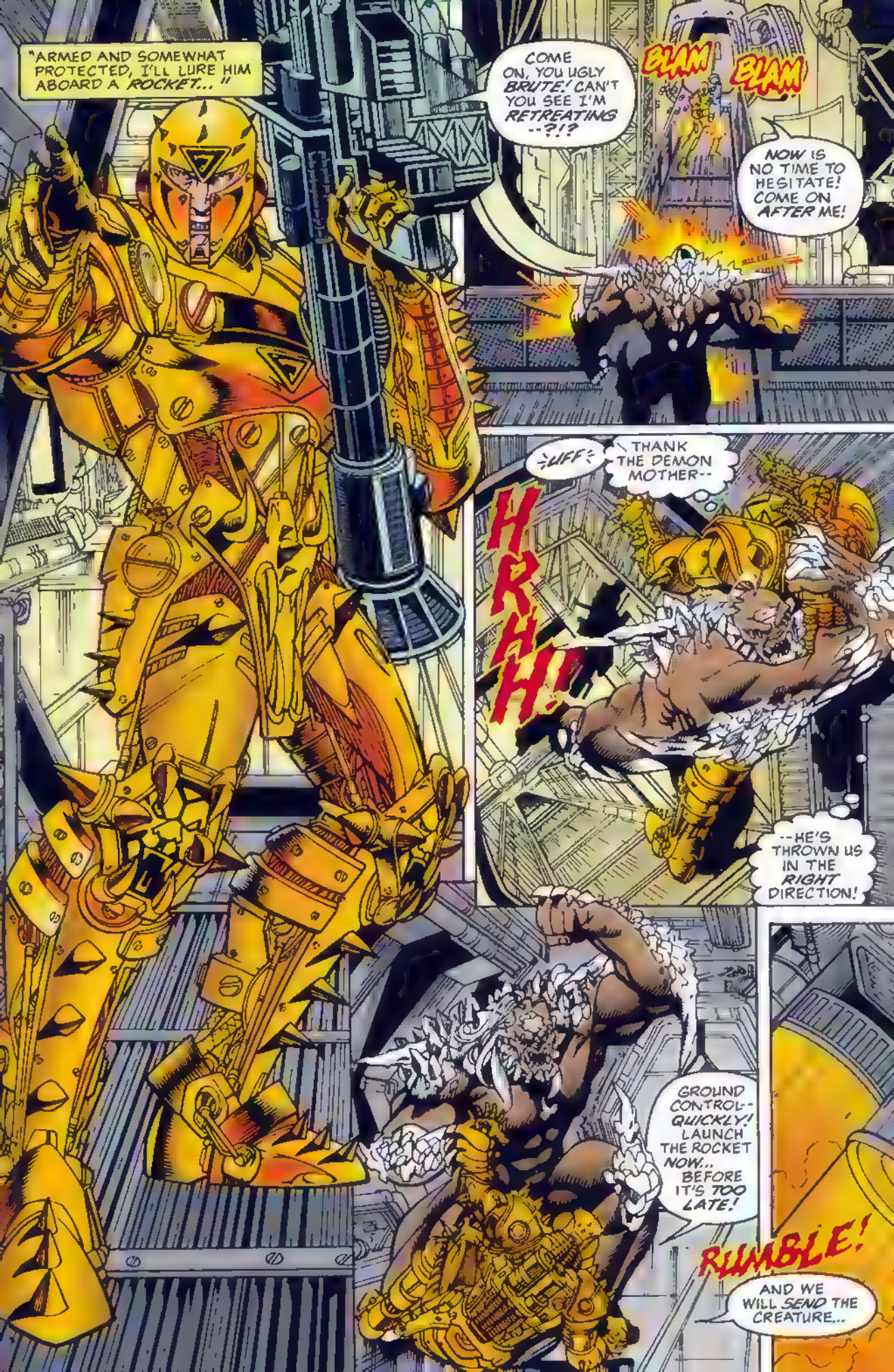
KRAK
HRRA!
GROMMARK! THAT MONSTER KILLED GROMMARK!
HE MAY BE A SECRET WEAPON... BUT HE'S NOT RED--
--NOR, APPARENTLY, IS HE BLACK! HE'S TAKING THE FRAY--
HRARR!
"--INTO THE STANDS!"
WE HAVE NO BLASTERS TO DEFEND OURSELVES! RUN!
RHAHRAR
"PERHAPS HE REPRESENTS SOME THIRD ENEMY OF BOTH OUR HOUSES--
"--FOR, RED OR BLACK, HE'S SLAUGHTERING US ALL!"
LOOK UP! A MONSTER... COMING OVER THE STADIUM WALLS!
DEMON MOTHER! WHAT IS THAT THING?
KRANCH
WHATEVER IT IS... IT'S A DEAD THING NOW! BLAST IT!
22

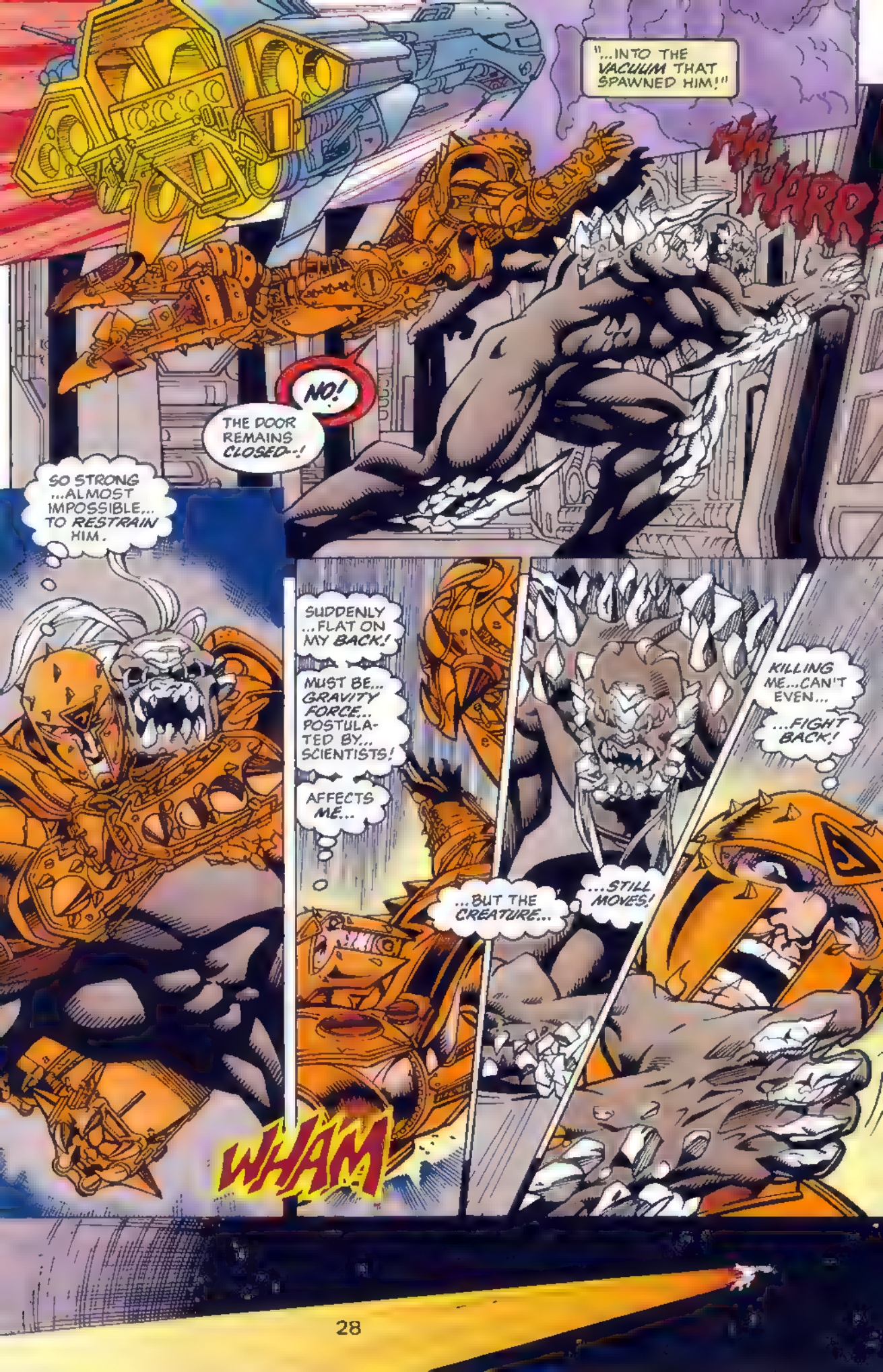
HURRAR-HA-HA-HA
THE CREATURE CONTINUES ITS RAMPAGE ACROSS OUR MOST DENSELY POPULATED AREAS...
OUR BULLETS DON'T EVEN SCRATCH IT!
BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA
THE VEHICLE IT'S GOING TO THROW THE--
KRAKA BUM
DESPITE INITIAL REPORTS THAT THE CREATURE WAS A SECRET WEAPON CREATED BY A FEUDING FAMILY...
...IT IS NOW BELIEVED THAT HE CAME FROM OUTER SPACE.
WHETHER HE IS A WEAPON OF SOME UNKNOWN RACE DELIBERATELY SENT AGAINST ALL KHUNDIA...
...IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME.
FAMILIES WITH SPACE-FARING POTENTIAL ARE BEGINNING TO PUT ASIDE THEIR DIFFERENCES...


"...AND LOOK TO THE HEAVENS FOR ANSWERS."
WE KHUNDIANS HAVE THE DUTY TO SLAY THEIR ENEMIES AND GROW STRONG IN COMBAT.
BUT GROMMARK'S AND MY RIGHT TO COMBAT WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE ATTACK OF THE CREATURE.
WE KNOW NOW THAT NONE OF US CREATED HIM.
I, KOBALD, NOW LIGHT THE FUNERAL PYRE THAT WILL SEND GROMMARK INTO OUR DEMON MOTHER'S TERRIBLE EMBRACE...
...AND I PLEDGE MY LIFE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MONSTER ...AS GROMMARK HAS GIVEN HIS.
UNTIL NOW, IT HAS BEEN RIGHT THAT NO CLAN TRUST ANOTHER.
BUT NO CLAN ALONE HAS THE POWER OR KNOWLEDGE TO DESTROY THIS GREAT ENEMY.
"WE MUST FIND A WAY TO WORK TOGETHER OR KHUNDIA IS LOST!"
WE HAVE SENT UP TELESCOPES ON ROCKETS DONATED FROM SEVERAL FAMILIES' PRIVATE EXPERIMENTS...
FOOLS! WHY LOOK TO THE STARS FOR AN ENEMY...
WHERE IS HE FROM? WHY IS HE HERE? WHO SENT HIM?
WE MUST LEARN THESE ANSWERS... AND WE MUST UNITE TO DESTROY THE CREATURE.
...AND STILL CAN FIND NO TRACE OF OUR GREAT ENEMY.

"...WHEN THE ONE WE SEEK IS HERE."
HHRR
THERE HE IS! FIRE!
BBOOM
PDOW
PDOW
BUDDA-BUDD
BWHAM
HE'S DOWN! WE GOT HIM!
WAIT WHILE DRONES CHECK THE CRATER! THE GROUND JUST CAVED IN--HE COULD STILL LIVE!
IMPOSSIBLE! NOTHING COULD SURVIVE THAT BARRAGE!
THE CREATURE IS DEAD!
AT LAST...
"...WE ARE FREE FROM BLACK KOBALD'S COMMAND!"
NO!

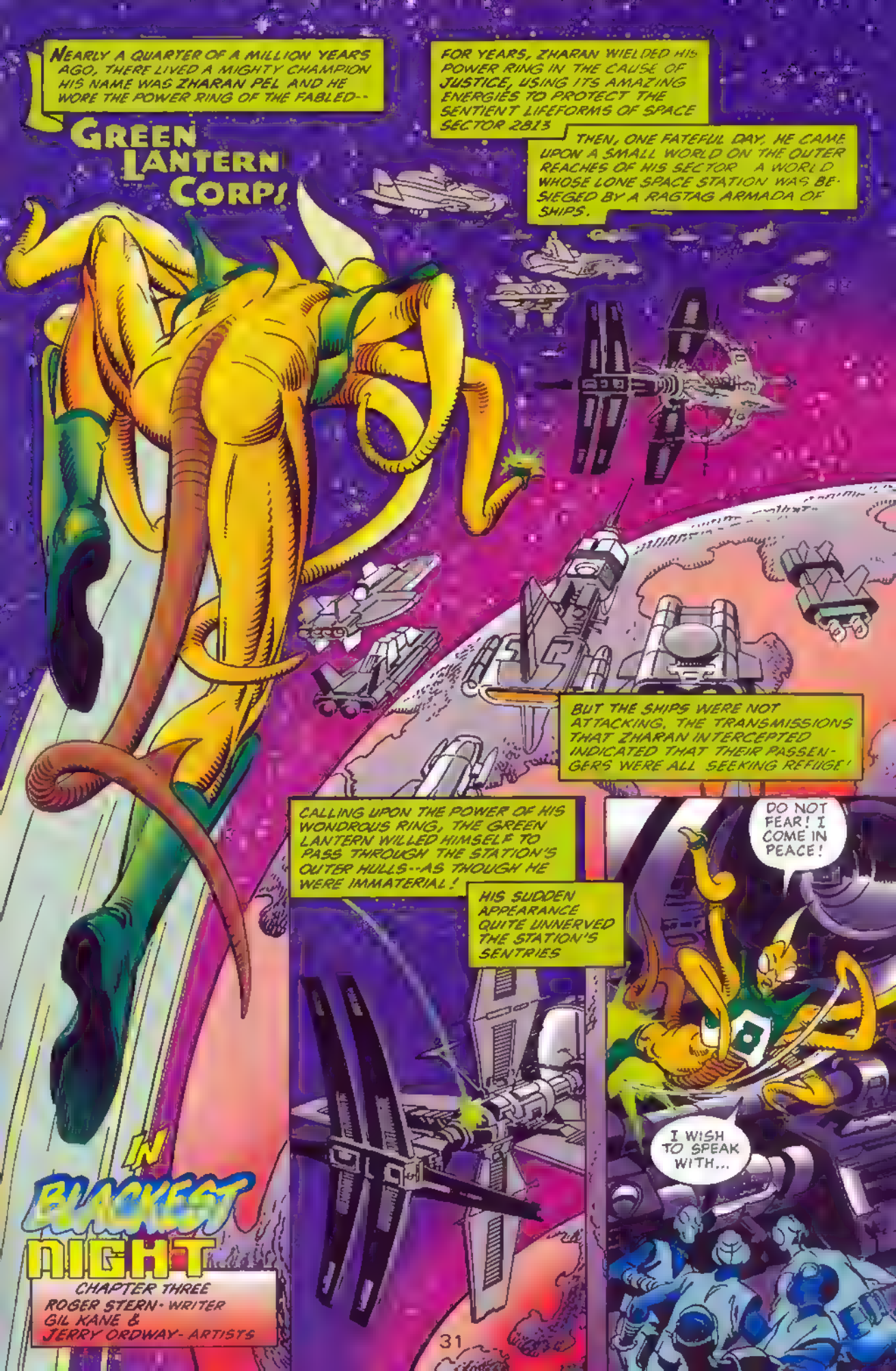

AAK!
HARR!
NO! I HAVE SEEN ENOUGH BRAVE MEN DIE AT THAT MONSTER'S HANDS!
KOBALD! NO! THEY WOULDN'T OBEY...THEY AREN'T OF YOUR CLAN!
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO!
YES--
"--THERE IS SOMETHING I CAN DO."
WEAPONS ALONE WON'T STOP THE CREATURE.
WE CAN'T DESTROY HIM... NOR CAN WE BIND HIM.
NONETHELESS, I HAVE FOUND A WAY TO RID KHUNDIA OF THAT MONSTER!
HOW?
YOU SCIENTISTS MUST BUILD ME ARMOR...
...STRONG ENOUGH TO PROTECT ME WHILE I APPROACH THE CREATURE ALONE.
ALONE?! ARE YOU MAD?!


"ARMED AND SOMEWHAT PROTECTED, I'LL LURE HIM ABOARD A ROCKET..."
COME ON, YOU UGLY BRUTE! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M RETREATING --?!?
BLAM
BLAM
NOW IS NO TIME TO HESITATE! COME ON AFTER ME!
UFF
THANK THE DEMON MOTHER--
HRHH!
--HE'S THROWN US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!
GROUND CONTROL-- QUICKLY! LAUNCH THE ROCKET NOW... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
RUMBLE!
AND WE WILL SEND THE CREATURE...


"...INTO THE VACUUM THAT SPAWNED HIM!"
HA HARR
NO!
THE DOOR REMAINS CLOSED--!
SO STRONG ...ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE... TO RESTRAIN HIM.
SUDDENLY ...FLAT ON MY BACK!
MUST BE... GRAVITY FORCE.. POSTULATED BY.. SCIENTISTS!
AFFECTS ME...
...BUT THE CREATURE...
...STILL MOVES!
KILLING ME...CAN'T EVEN...
...FIGHT BACK!
WHAM

WHAT'S THIS? SUDDENLY I'M... WE'RE BOTH... FLOATING--?!
CONGRATULATIONS, MIGHTY KOBALD. YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR MISSION.
BOTH YOU AND THE CREATURE HAVE LIFTED FREE OF OUR WORLD...
RHARR!
...AND ALL KHUNDIA, REVERES YOUR HEROIC SACRIFICE.
SCIENTISTS, TURN YOUR CAMERAS AWAY FROM ME...
...AND TOWARD THE SINGLE, OVERCROWDED WORLD...OUTSIDE MY WINDOW.
WE TOOK OUR ANGER...AND OUR ENERGY... USED IT...
IT IS NOT MY SACRIFICE ALONE... THAT HAS DRIVEN THE MONSTER FROM KHUNDIA...
...BUT THE COOPERATION OF ...OUR CLANS...
...TO CREATE AN ESCAPE...FROM OUR DARK, OVERCROWDED WORL--URK!

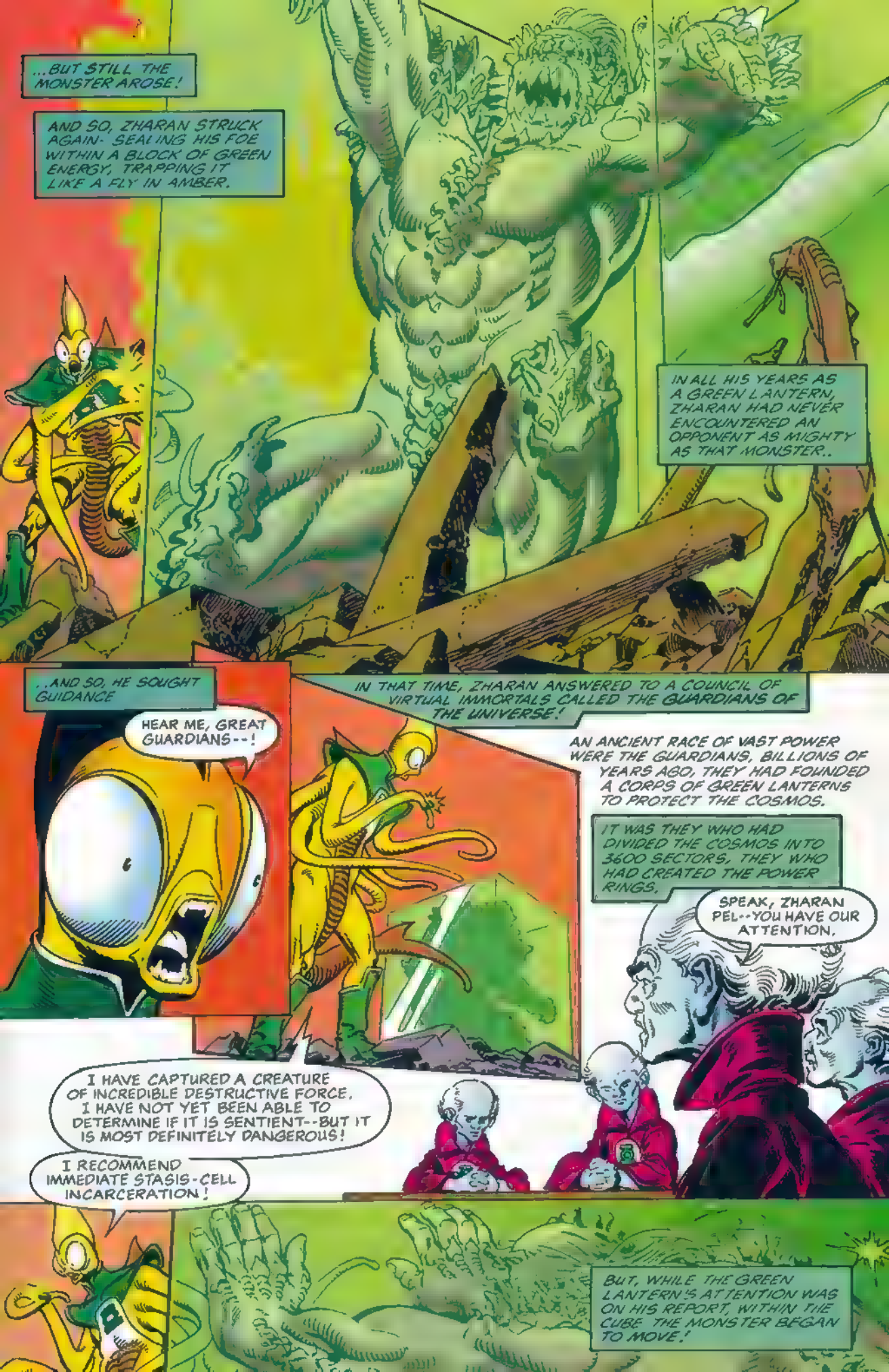
SO FAR, I ALONE... OF ALL OUR PEOPLE... HAVE SEEN OUR SUN!
BUT CONTINUE... TO WORK TOGETHER--
DEMON MOTHER, TAKE HIS SOUL!
--AND KHUNDIA... WILL OWN... THE STARS--
AAKK!
RHARR
THOOM!
HARR HA

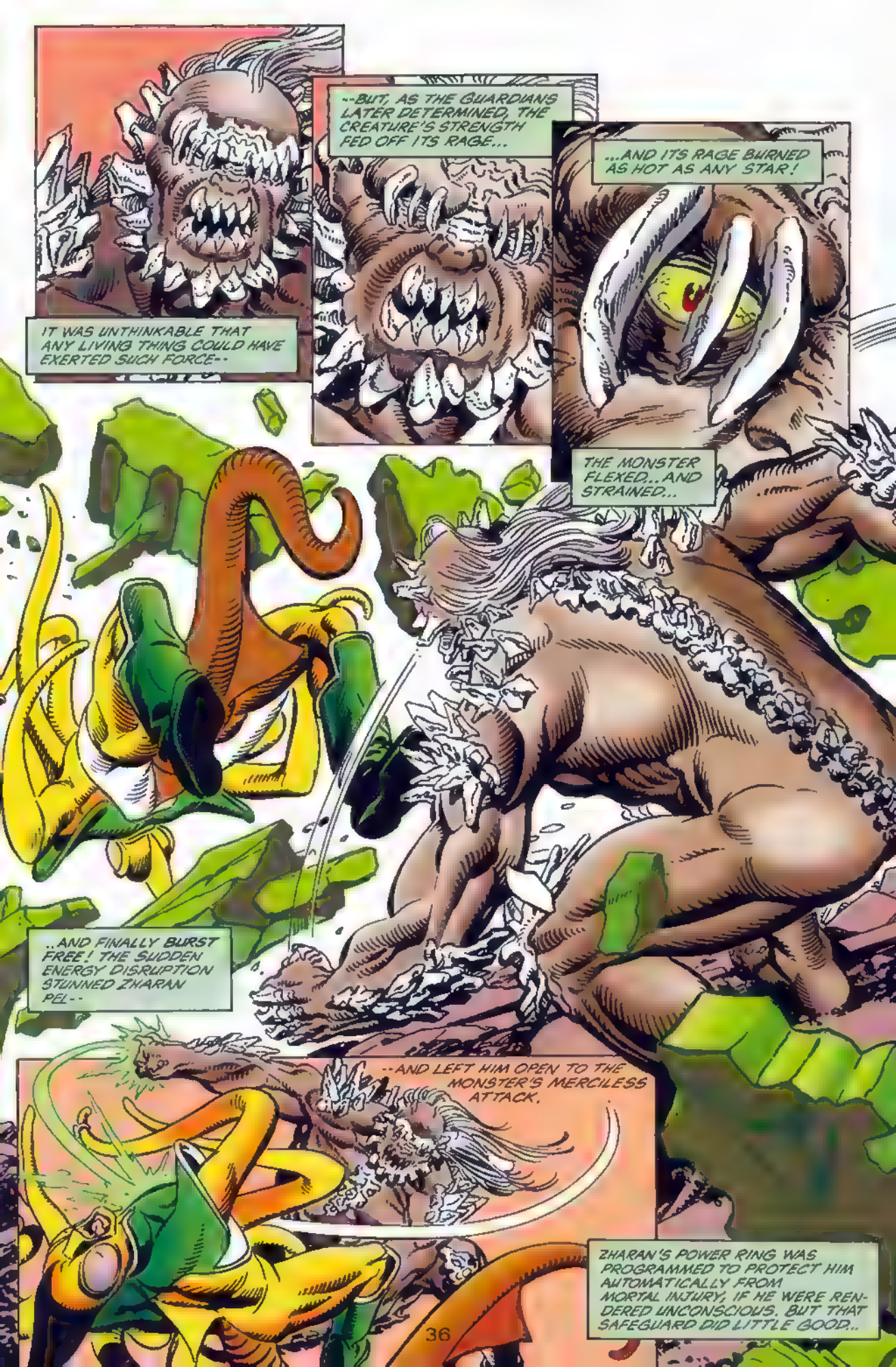

NEARLY A QUARTER OF A MILLION YEARS AGO, THERE LIVED A MIGHTY CHAMPION HIS NAME WAS ZHARAN PEL AND HE WORE THE POWER RING OF THE FABLED--
GREEN LANTERN CORPS
FOR YEARS, ZHARAN WIELDED HIS POWER RING IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE, USING ITS AMAZING ENERGIES TO PROTECT THE SENTIENT LIFEFORMS OF SPACE SECTOR 2813
THEN, ONE FATEFUL DAY, HE CAME UPON A SMALL WORLD ON THE OUTER REACHES OF HIS SECTOR A WORLD WHOSE LONE SPACE STATION WAS BESIEGED BY A RAGTAG ARMADA OF SHIPS.
BUT THE SHIPS WERE NOT ATTACKING. THE TRANSMISSIONS THAT ZHARAN INTERCEPTED INDICATED THAT THEIR PASSENGERS WERE ALL SEEKING REFUGE!
CALLING UPON THE POWER OF HIS WONDROUS RING, THE GREEN LANTERN WILLED HIMSELF TO PASS THROUGH THE STATION'S OUTER HULLS--AS THOUGH HE WERE IMMATERIAL!
HIS SUDDEN APPEARANCE QUITE UNNERVED THE STATION'S SENTRIES
DO NOT FEAR! I COME IN PEACE!
I WISH TO SPEAK WITH...
IN BLACKEST NIGHT
CHAPTER THREE
ROGER STERN - WRITER
GIL KANE & JERRY ORDWAY - ARTISTS

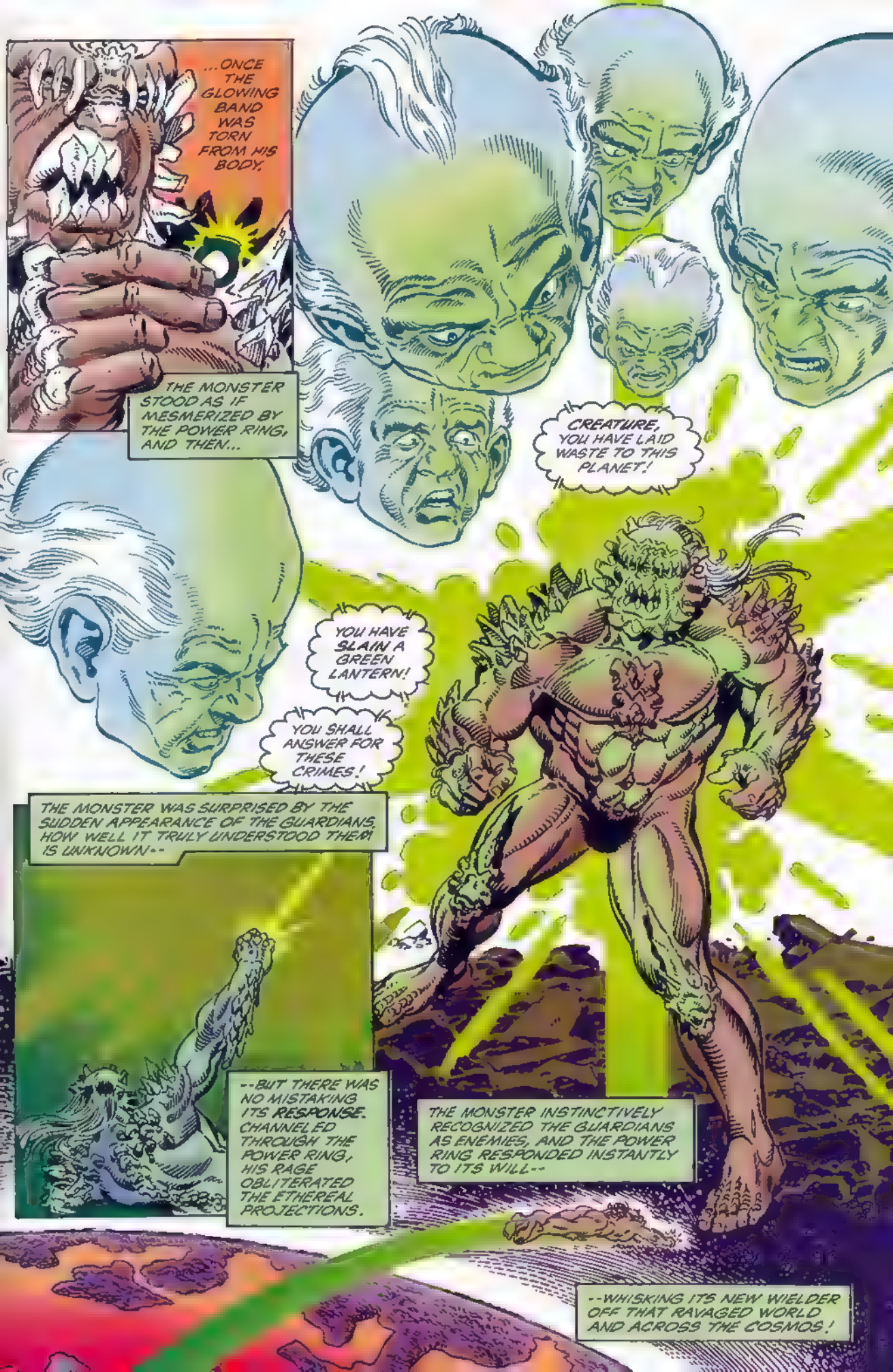
"...YOUR COMMANDER."
YOUR ARRIVAL IS MOST WELCOME, GREEN LANTERN! MY PEOPLE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR GREAT EXPLOITS FROM OTHER VISITORS.
THERE IS PANIC ABOARD THE ORBITING SHIPS--!
YES, AND THERE ARE MORE OF THEM THAN THIS STATION WAS EVER DESIGNED TO HANDLE.
THEY WERE ALL LAUNCHED IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE THE MONSTER THAT EVEN NOW TERRORIZES OUR HOMEWORLD BELOW. HALF A PLANET LIES IN RUINS...
"...I KNOW, IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE THAT ONE CREATURE COULD CAUSE SUCH DESTRUCTION--BUT I HAVE SEEN THE TRANSMISSIONS, I HAVE LISTENED TO THE LAMENTATIONS OF SURVIVORS.
"WE NOW KNOW THAT AN ALIEN STARSHIP CRASHED ON OUR WORLD ONE WEEK AGO. THE MONSTER WAS THE SOLE SURVIVOR. IT HAD KILLED THE SHIP'S CREW--AND IT SEEMS HELL-BENT ON DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.
"OUR ARMIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO STOP IT..

"...YOU, GREEN LANTERN, ARE OUR ONLY REMAINING HOPE!"
CREATURE! I DEMAND YOUR SURRENDER--!
THE MONSTER IGNORED THE COMMAND, AND LEAPT HEADLONG AT ZHARAN.
EVIDENTLY, HE HAD NEVER BEFORE ENCOUNTERED A GREEN LANTERN.
AT FIRST, THE MONSTER SEEMED CONFUSED BY THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF ZHARAN'S EMERALD FORCE-FIELD.
BUT THEN, HIS EXPRESSION TURNED FROM CONFUSION TO A LOOK OF MADDENED GLEE!
FOR THE MONSTER, YOU SEE, LIVED ONLY TO KILL, TO DESTROY ... AND HERE, AT LAST, WAS AN OPPONENT WHO PRESENTED A CHALLENGE!

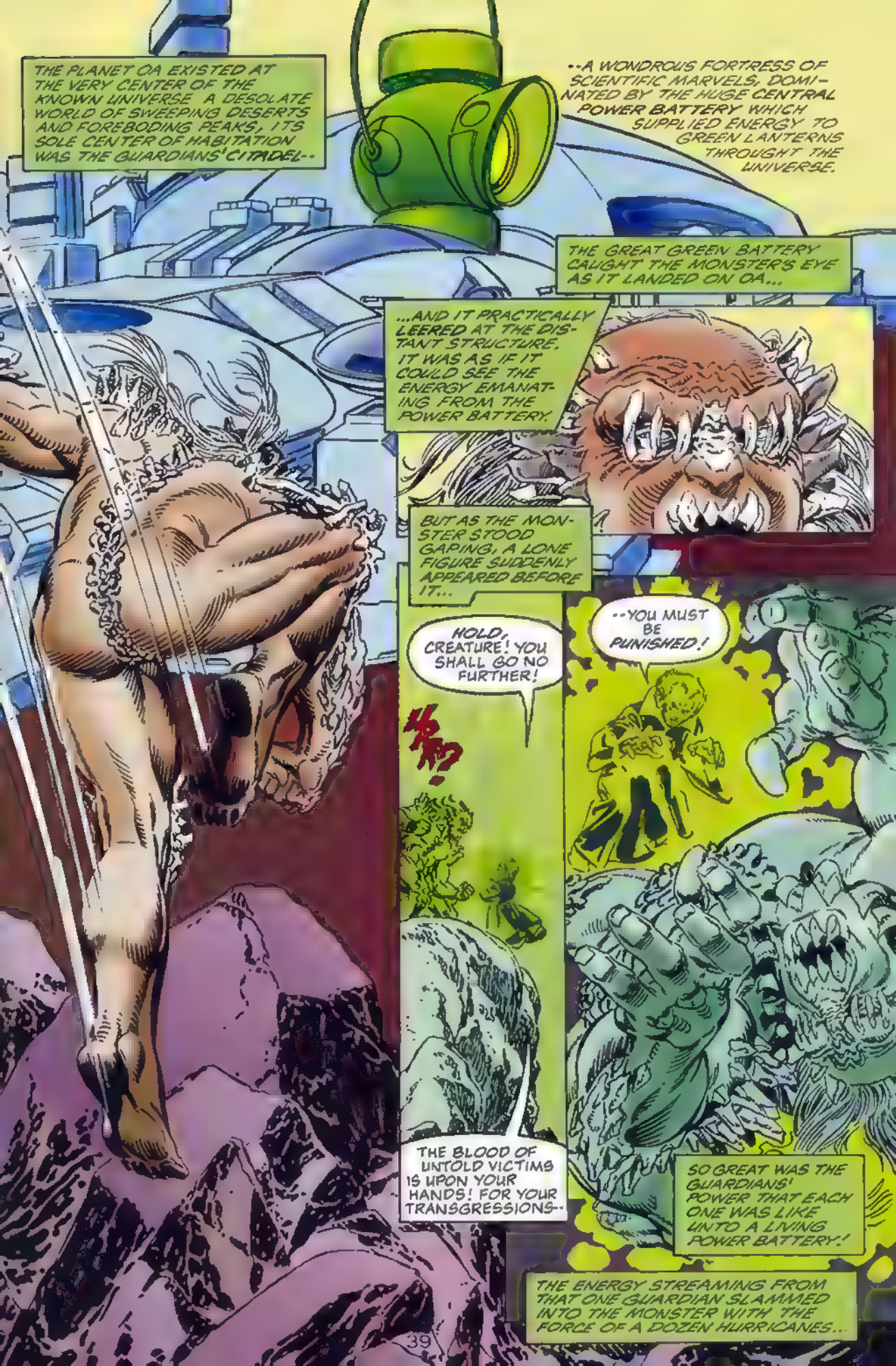
THE MONSTER ATTACKED ANEW-- STRIKING SO SAVAGELY THAT DESPITE THE POWER OF HIS RING, ZHARAN WAS FORCED BACK!
SO POWERFUL WAS THE FORCE OF THE MONSTER'S BLOWS THAT THE GREEN LANTERN'S PROTECTIVE ENERGY SPHERE BEGAN TO WEAKEN, TO CRACK--
--AND FINALLY TO SHATTER, AS IF IT WERE THE MOST FRAGILE OF EGG-SHELLS!
BADLY SHAKEN THOUGH HE WAS, ZHARAN RALLIED AND STRUCK BACK-- CHANNELING EVERY BIT OF HIS WILL THROUGH HIS POWER RING!
THE UNLEASHED ENERGY BLASTED THE MONSTER THROUGH A DOZEN STONE WALLS AND HALFWAY ACROSS THE RUINS OF THE CITY...

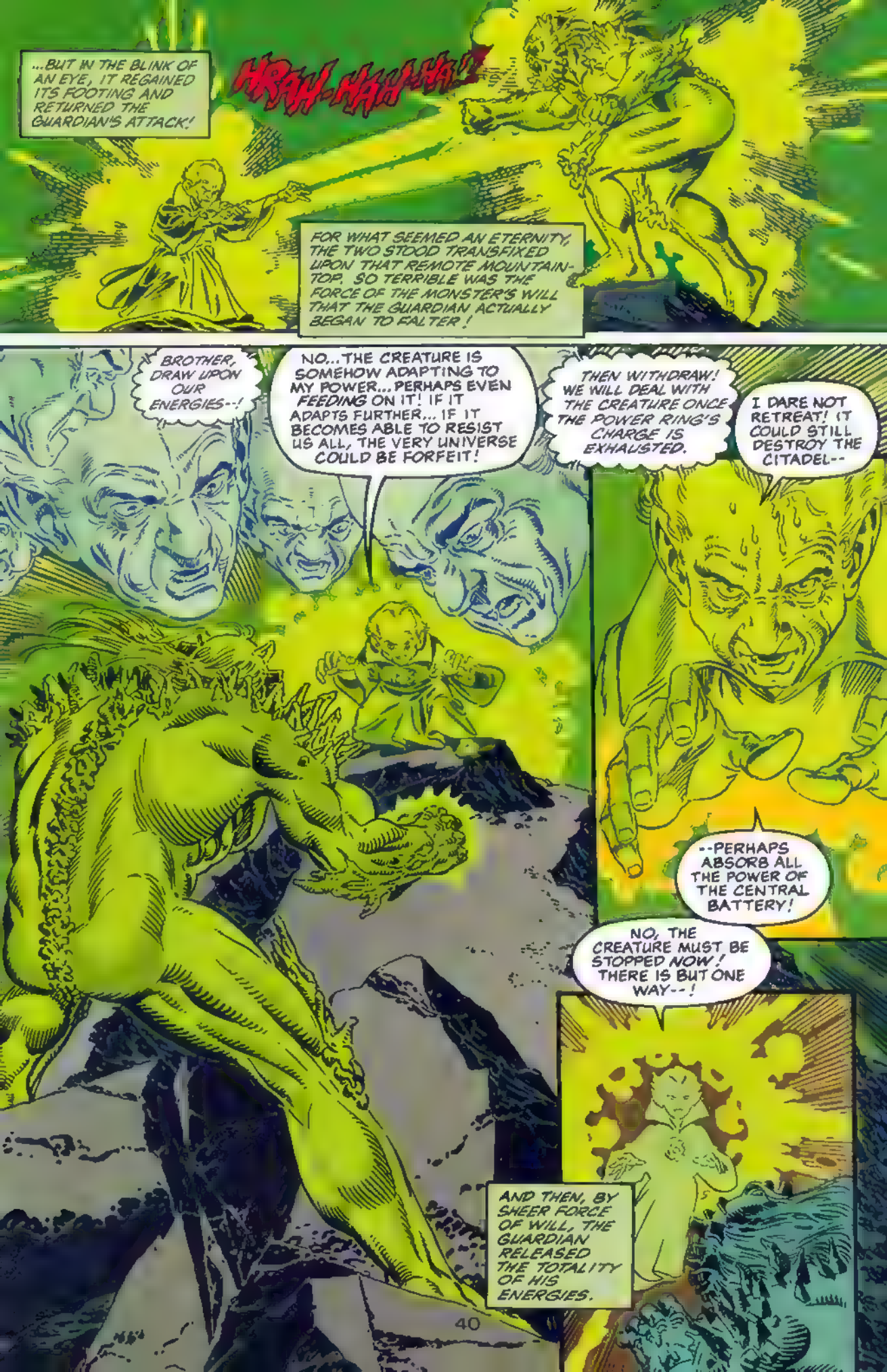

...BUT STILL THE MONSTER AROSE!
AND SO, ZHARAN STRUCK AGAIN- SEALING HIS FOE WITHIN A BLOCK OF GREEN ENERGY, TRAPPING IT LIKE A FLY IN AMBER.
IN ALL HIS YEARS AS A GREEN LANTERN, ZHARAN HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED AN OPPONENT AS MIGHTY AS THAT MONSTER..
..AND SO, HE SOUGHT GUIDANCE
HEAR ME, GREAT GUARDIANS--!
IN THAT TIME, ZHARAN ANSWERED TO A COUNCIL OF VIRTUAL IMMORTALS CALLED THE GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE!
AN ANCIENT RACE OF VAST POWER WERE THE GUARDIANS, BILLIONS OF YEARS AGO, THEY HAD FOUNDED A CORPS OF GREEN LANTERNS TO PROTECT THE COSMOS.
IT WAS THEY WHO HAD DIVIDED THE COSMOS INTO 3600 SECTORS, THEY WHO HAD CREATED THE POWER RINGS.
SPEAK, ZHARAN PEL--YOU HAVE OUR ATTENTION.
I HAVE CAPTURED A CREATURE OF INCREDIBLE DESTRUCTIVE FORCE. I HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE IF IT IS SENTIENT--BUT IT IS MOST DEFINITELY DANGEROUS!
I RECOMMEND IMMEDIATE STASIS-CELL INCARCERATION!
BUT, WHILE THE GREEN LANTERN'S ATTENTION WAS ON HIS REPORT, WITHIN THE CUBE THE MONSTER BEGAN TO MOVE!

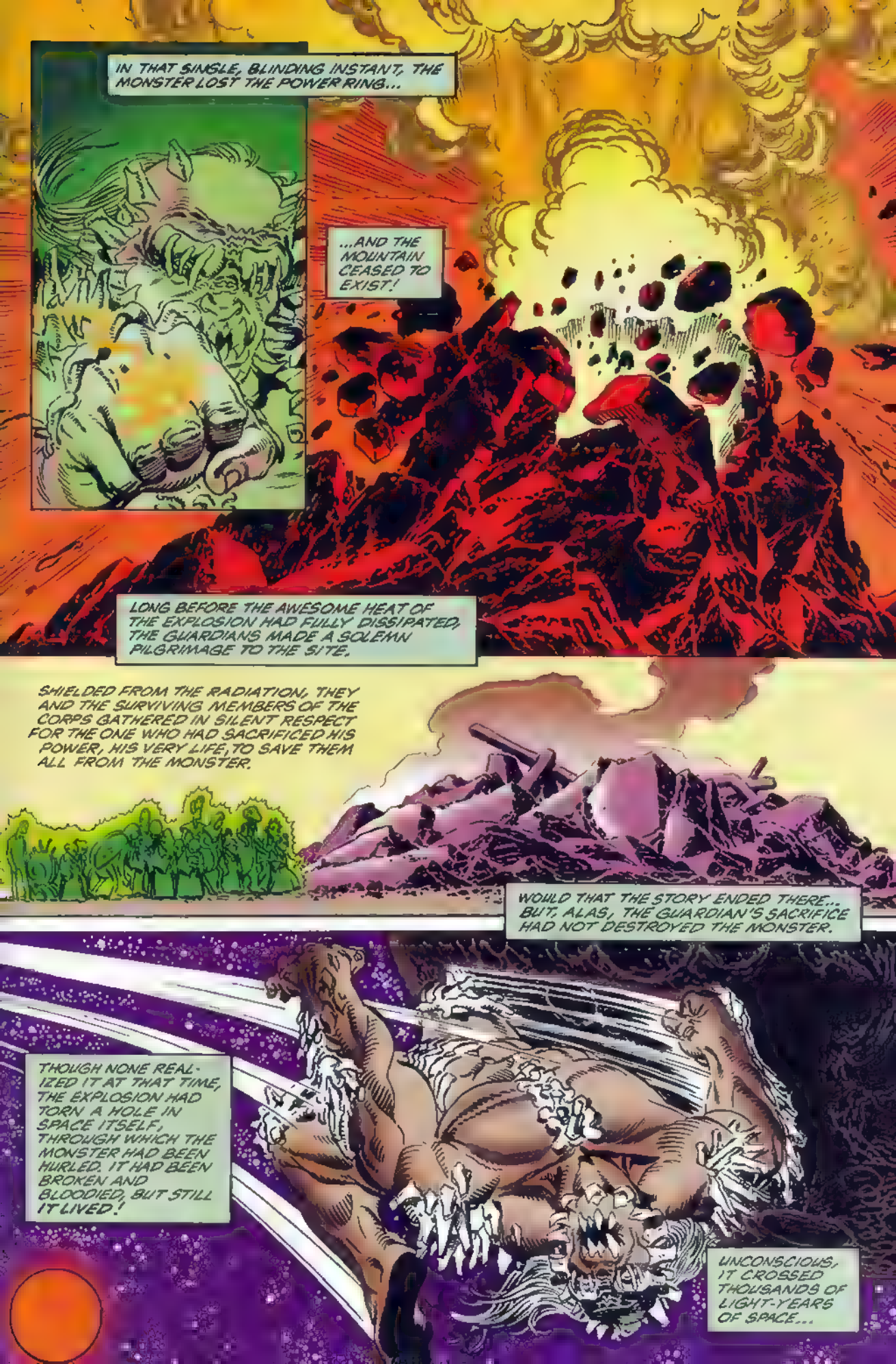

IT WAS UNTHINKABLE THAT ANY LIVING THING COULD HAVE EXERTED SUCH FORCE--
--BUT, AS THE GUARDIANS LATER DETERMINED, THE CREATURE'S STRENGTH FED OFF ITS RAGE...
...AND ITS RAGE BURNED AS HOT AS ANY STAR!
THE MONSTER FLEXED... AND STRAINED...
..AND FINALLY BURST FREE! THE SUDDEN ENERGY DISRUPTION STUNNED ZHARAN PEL--
--AND LEFT HIM OPEN TO THE MONSTER'S MERCILESS ATTACK.
ZHARAN'S POWER RING WAS PROGRAMMED TO PROTECT HIM AUTOMATICALLY FROM MORTAL INJURY, IF HE WERE RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS. BUT THAT SAFEGUARD DID LITTLE GOOD..

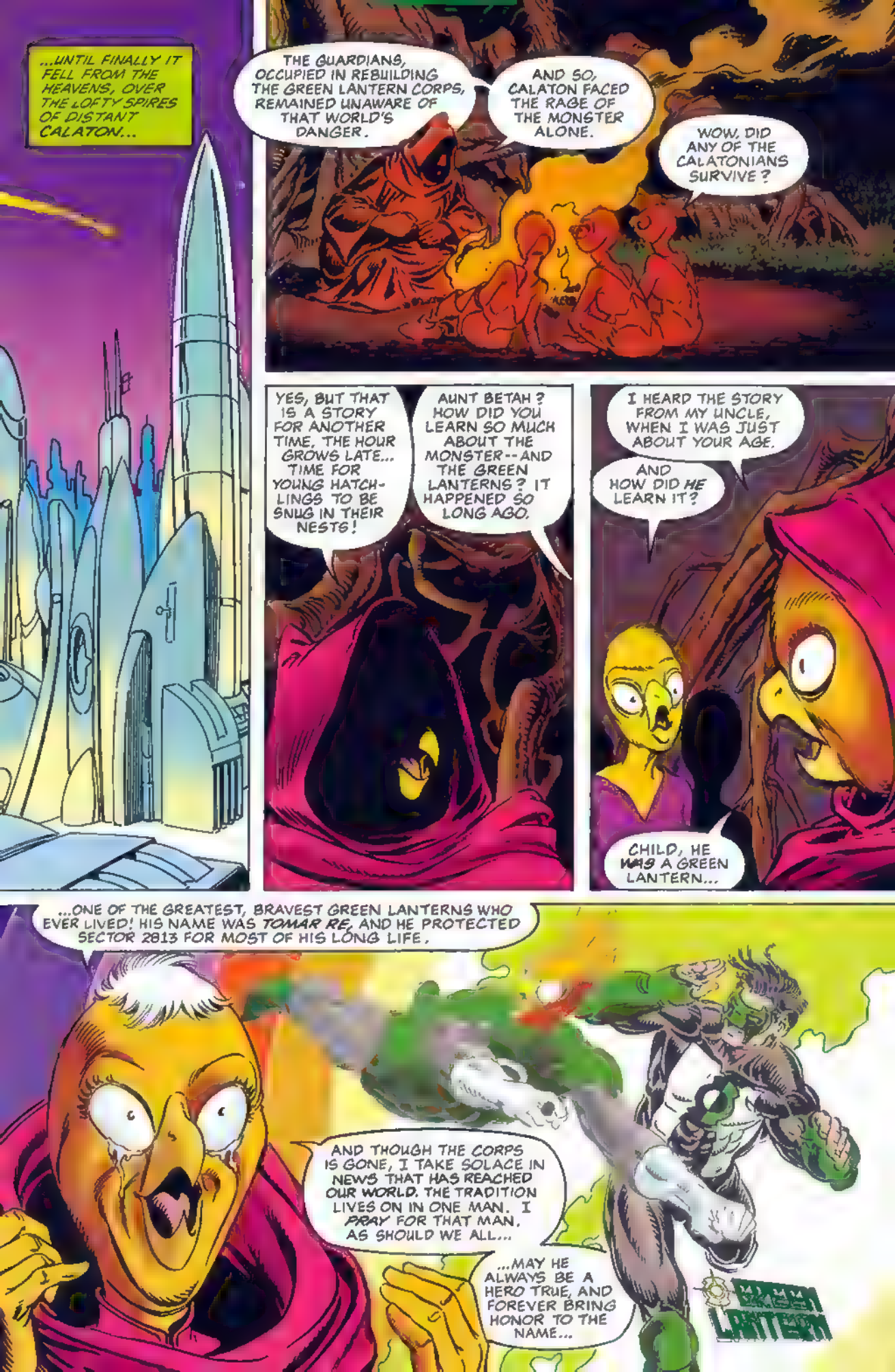

...ONCE THE GLOWING BAND WAS TORN FROM HIS BODY.
THE MONSTER STOOD AS IF MESMERIZED BY THE POWER RING, AND THEN...
CREATURE, YOU HAVE LAID WASTE TO THIS PLANET!
YOU HAVE SLAIN A GREEN LANTERN!
YOU SHALL ANSWER FOR THESE CRIMES!
THE MONSTER WAS SURPRISED BY THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THE GUARDIANS. HOW WELL IT TRULY UNDERSTOOD THEM IS UNKNOWN--
--BUT THERE WAS NO MISTAKING ITS RESPONSE. CHANNELED THROUGH THE POWER RING, HIS RAGE OBLITERATED THE ETHEREAL PROJECTIONS.
THE MONSTER INSTINCTIVELY RECOGNIZED THE GUARDIANS AS ENEMIES, AND THE POWER RING RESPONDED INSTANTLY TO ITS WILL--
--WHISKING ITS NEW WIELDER OFF THAT RAVAGED WORLD AND ACROSS THE COSMOS!

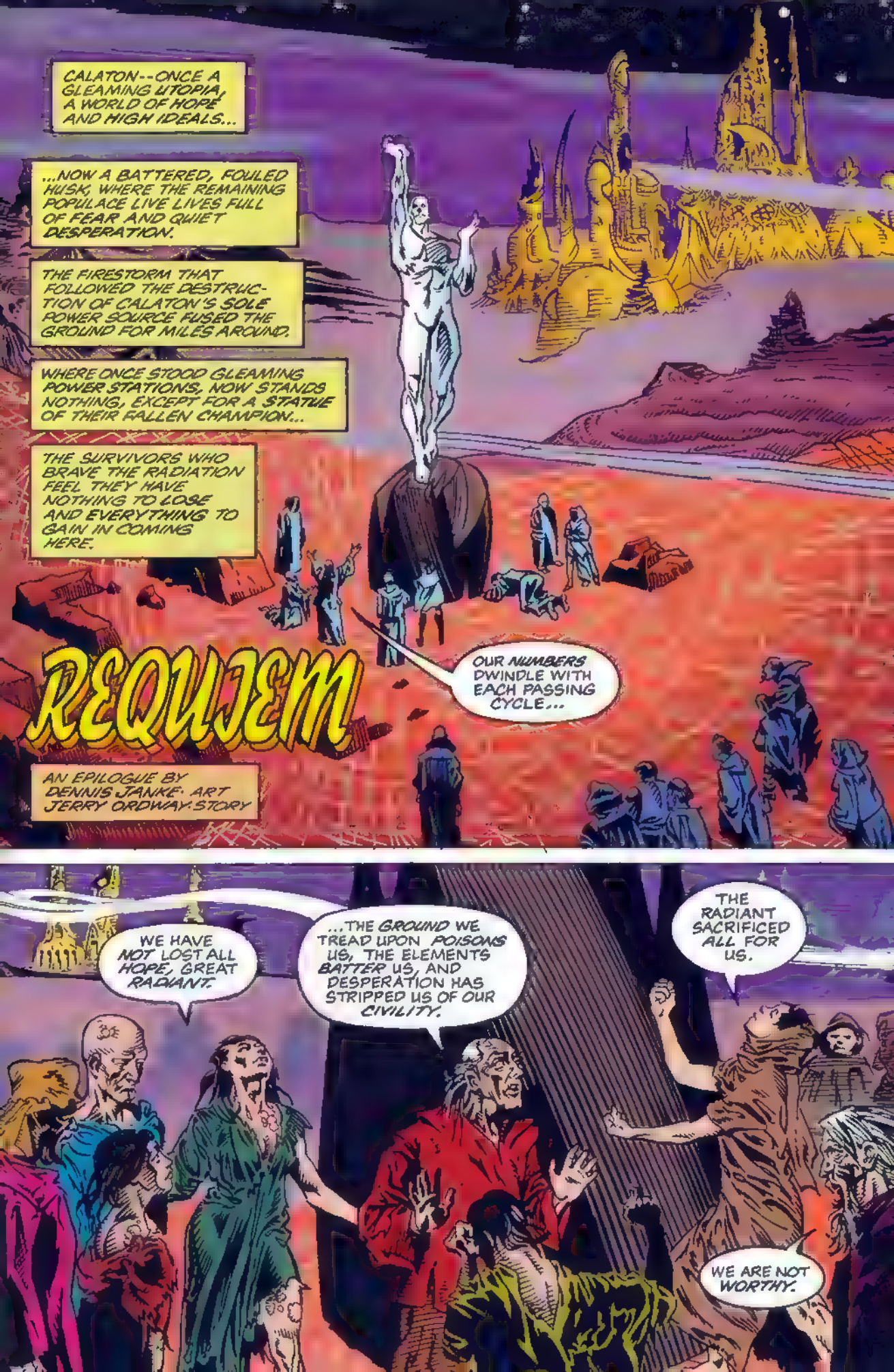
THE GUARDIANS IMMEDIATELY ALERTED THE ENTIRE GREEN LANTERN CORPS. WAVE AFTER WAVE OF EMERALD WARRIORS ROSE UP AGAINST THE MONSTER...
...AND WAVE AFTER WAVE WAS CRUSHED.
THE MONSTER DISARMED AND SLEW HUNDREDS OF GREEN LANTERNS, AND LEFT A THOUSAND MORE WOUNDED AND DRIFTING ACROSS THE VASTNESS OF SPACE.
THE CORPS WOULD NOT KNOW ANOTHER SUCH DEFEAT FOR HUNDREDS OF MILLENNIA.
FROM THEIR CITADEL ON THE DISTANT PLANET OA, THE GUARDIANS WATCHED IN GROWING HORROR...
THE CREATURE IS DECIMATING THE CORPS! BUT TO WHAT PURPOSE?
LONG-RANGE SCANS ARE INCONCLUSIVE. THE BEAST SEEMS MORE A FORCE OF NATURE THAN A SENTIENT BEING... IT LIVES BUT TO DESTROY.
YES, AND IT HAS INTUITIVELY TAPPED INTO THE POWER OF THE RING, TO SEEK OUT AND DESTROY THOSE IT CONSIDERS ENEMIES.
BROTHERS, THE CREATURE IS COMING HERE... TO OA!


THE PLANET OA EXISTED AT THE VERY CENTER OF THE KNOWN UNIVERSE. A DESOLATE WORLD OF SWEEPING DESERTS AND FOREBODING PEAKS, ITS SOLE CENTER OF HABITATION WAS THE GUARDIANS' CITADEL--
--A WONDROUS FORTRESS OF SCIENTIFIC MARVELS, DOMINATED BY THE HUGE CENTRAL POWER BATTERY WHICH SUPPLIED ENERGY TO GREEN LANTERNS THROUGHT THE UNIVERSE.
THE GREAT GREEN BATTERY CAUGHT THE MONSTER'S EYE AS IT LANDED ON OA...
...AND IT PRACTICALLY LEERED AT THE DISTANT STRUCTURE. IT WAS AS IF IT COULD SEE THE ENERGY EMANATING FROM THE POWER BATTERY.
BUT AS THE MONSTER STOOD GAPING, A LONE FIGURE SUDDENLY APPEARED BEFORE IT...
HOLD, CREATURE! YOU SHALL GO NO FURTHER!
--YOU MUST BE PUNISHED!
THE BLOOD OF UNTOLD VICTIMS IS UPON YOUR HANDS! FOR YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS--
SO GREAT WAS THE GUARDIANS' POWER THAT EACH ONE WAS LIKE UNTO A LIVING POWER BATTERY!
THE ENERGY STREAMING FROM THAT ONE GUARDIAN SLAMMED INTO THE MONSTER WITH THE FORCE OF A DOZEN HURRICANES...

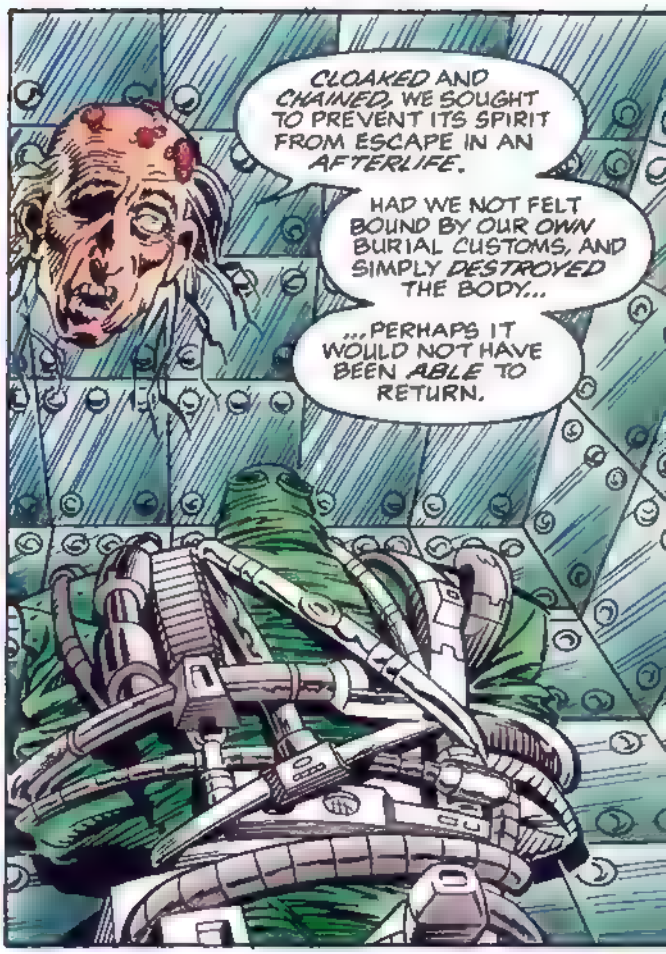

...BUT IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, IT REGAINED ITS FOOTING AND RETURNED THE GUARDIAN'S ATTACK!
HRAH-HAH-HA!
FOR WHAT SEEMED AN ETERNITY, THE TWO STOOD TRANSFIXED UPON THAT REMOTE MOUNTAIN-TOP. SO TERRIBLE WAS THE FORCE OF THE MONSTER'S WILL THAT THE GUARDIAN ACTUALLY BEGAN TO FALTER!
BROTHER, DRAW UPON OUR ENERGIES--!
NO...THE CREATURE IS SOMEHOW ADAPTING TO MY POWER...PERHAPS EVEN FEEDING ON IT! IF IT ADAPTS FURTHER... IF IT BECOMES ABLE TO RESIST US ALL, THE VERY UNIVERSE COULD BE FORFEIT!
THEN WITHDRAW! WE WILL DEAL WITH THE CREATURE ONCE THE POWER RING'S CHARGE IS EXHAUSTED.
I DARE NOT RETREAT! IT COULD STILL DESTROY THE CITADEL--
--PERHAPS ABSORB ALL THE POWER OF THE CENTRAL BATTERY!
NO, THE CREATURE MUST BE STOPPED NOW! THERE IS BUT ONE WAY--!
AND THEN, BY SHEER FORCE OF WILL, THE GUARDIAN RELEASED THE TOTALITY OF HIS ENERGIES.

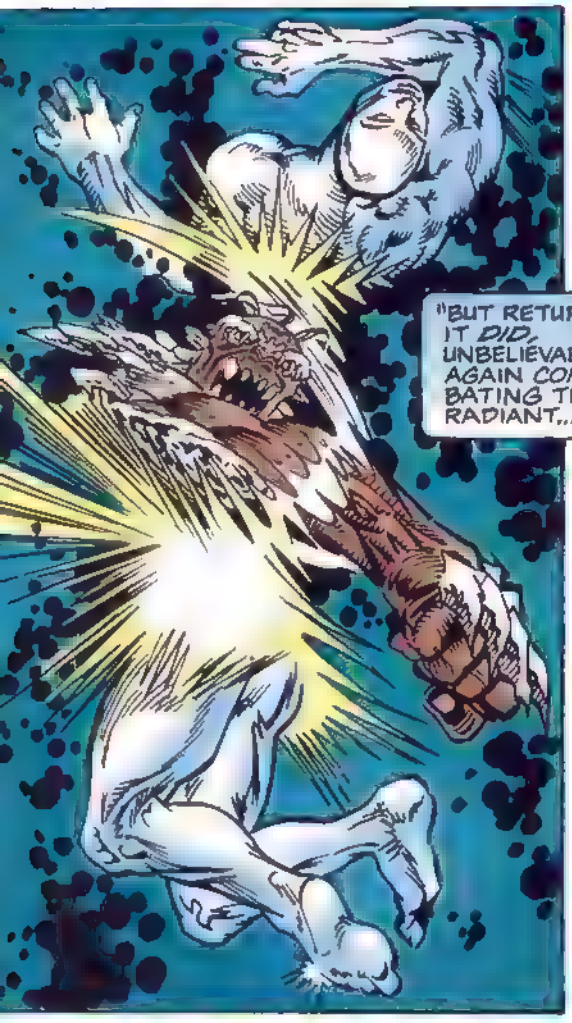

IN THAT SINGLE, BLINDING INSTANT, THE MONSTER LOST THE POWER RING...
...AND THE MOUNTAIN CEASED TO EXIST!
LONG BEFORE THE AWESOME HEAT OF THE EXPLOSION HAD FULLY DISSIPATED, THE GUARDIANS MADE A SOLEMN PILGRIMAGE TO THE SITE.
SHIELDED FROM THE RADIATION, THEY AND THE SURVIVING MEMBERS OF THE CORPS GATHERED IN SILENT RESPECT FOR THE ONE WHO HAD SACRIFICED HIS POWER, HIS VERY LIFE, TO SAVE THEM ALL FROM THE MONSTER.
WOULD THAT THE STORY ENDED THERE... BUT, ALAS, THE GUARDIAN'S SACRIFICE HAD NOT DESTROYED THE MONSTER.
THOUGH NONE REALIZED IT AT THAT TIME, THE EXPLOSION HAD TORN A HOLE IN SPACE ITSELF, THROUGH WHICH THE MONSTER HAD BEEN HURLED. IT HAD BEEN BROKEN AND BLOODIED, BUT STILL IT LIVED!
UNCONSCIOUS, IT CROSSED THOUSANDS OF LIGHT-YEARS OF SPACE...


...UNTIL FINALLY IT FELL FROM THE HEAVENS, OVER THE LOFTY SPIRES OF DISTANT CALATON...
THE GUARDIANS, OCCUPIED IN REBUILDING THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS, REMAINED UNAWARE OF THAT WORLD'S DANGER.
AND SO, CALATON FACED THE RAGE OF THE MONSTER ALONE.
WOW, DID ANY OF THE CALATONIANS SURVIVE?
YES, BUT THAT IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME, THE HOUR GROWS LATE... TIME FOR YOUNG HATCHLINGS TO BE SNUG IN THEIR NESTS!
AUNT BETAH? HOW DID YOU LEARN SO MUCH ABOUT THE MONSTER--AND THE GREEN LANTERNS? IT HAPPENED SO LONG AGO.
I HEARD THE STORY FROM MY UNCLE, WHEN I WAS JUST ABOUT YOUR AGE.
AND HOW DID HE LEARN IT?
CHILD, HE WAS A GREEN LANTERN...
...ONE OF THE GREATEST, BRAVEST GREEN LANTERNS WHO EVER LIVED! HIS NAME WAS TOMAR RE, AND HE PROTECTED SECTOR 2813 FOR MOST OF HIS LONG LIFE.
AND THOUGH THE CORPS IS GONE, I TAKE SOLACE IN NEWS THAT HAS REACHED OUR WORLD. THE TRADITION LIVES ON IN ONE MAN. I PRAY FOR THAT MAN, AS SHOULD WE ALL...
...MAY HE ALWAYS BE A HERO TRUE, AND FOREVER BRING HONOR TO THE NAME...
GREEN LANTERN


CALATON--ONCE A GLEAMING UTOPIA, A WORLD OF HOPE AND HIGH IDEALS...
...NOW A BATTERED, FOULED HUSK, WHERE THE REMAINING POPULACE LIVE LIVES FULL OF FEAR AND QUIET DESPERATION.
THE FIRESTORM THAT FOLLOWED THE DESTRUCTION OF CALATON'S SOLE POWER SOURCE FUSED THE GROUND FOR MILES AROUND.
WHERE ONCE STOOD GLEAMING POWER STATIONS, NOW STANDS NOTHING, EXCEPT FOR A STATUE OF THEIR FALLEN CHAMPION...
THE SURVIVORS WHO BRAVE THE RADIATION FEEL THEY HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN IN COMING HERE.
REQUIEM
AN EPILOGUE BY DENNIS JANKE· ART JERRY ORDWAY·STORY
OUR NUMBERS DWINDLE WITH EACH PASSING CYCLE...
WE HAVE NOT LOST ALL HOPE, GREAT RADIANT.
...THE GROUND WE TREAD UPON POISONS US, THE ELEMENTS BATTER US, AND DESPERATION HAS STRIPPED US OF OUR CIVILITY.
THE RADIANT SACRIFICED ALL FOR US.
WE ARE NOT WORTHY.

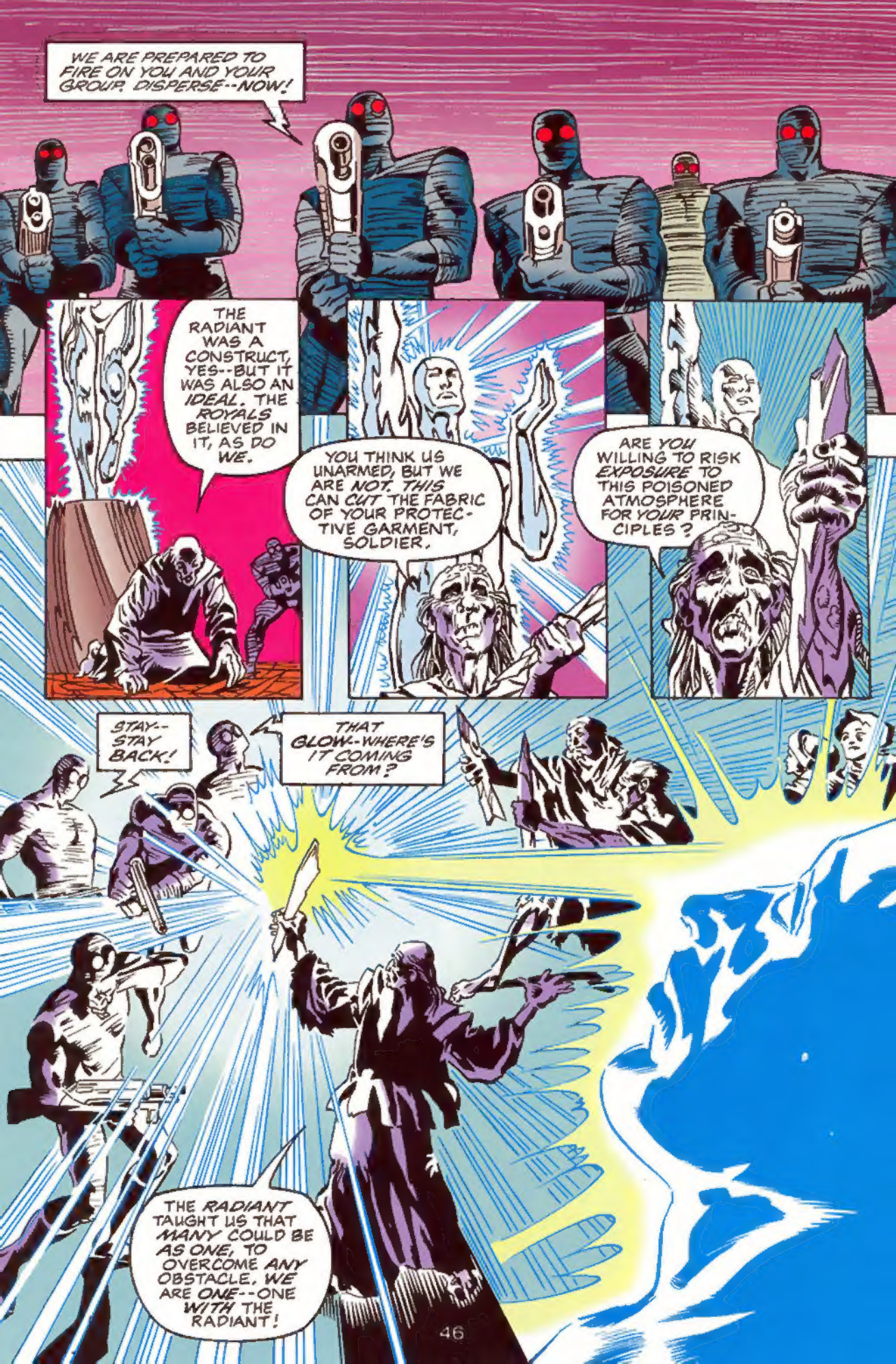
WE HAVE BEEN VISITED TWICE BY THE FORCE OF THE ARMAGEDDON CREATURE.
OUR WORLD'S ROYAL FAMILY CHANNELED THEIR ESSENCES TO CREATE AN ENERGY-BEING-- THE RADIANT, WHO DEFEATED THIS DOOMSDAY MONSTER.

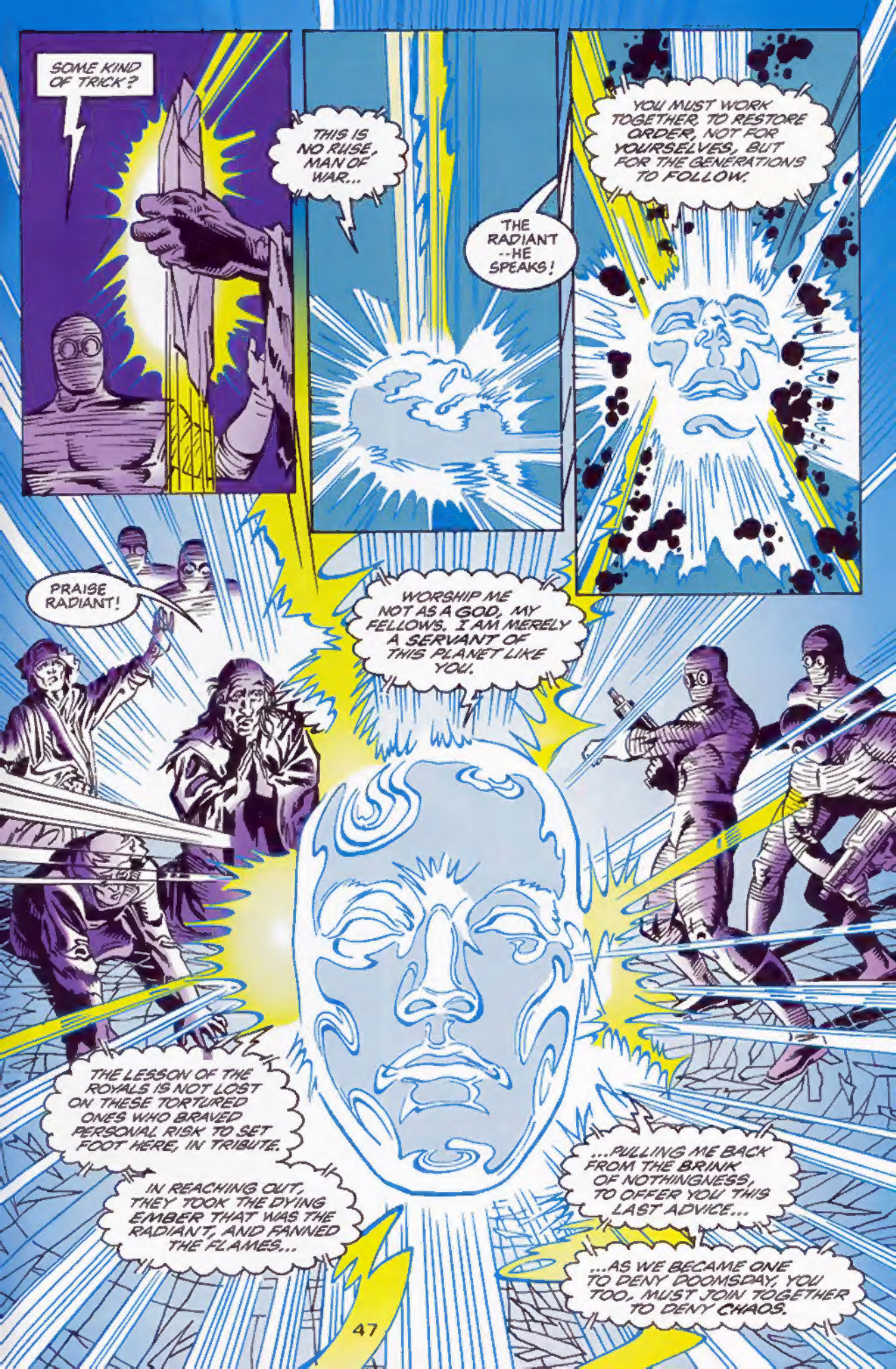

CLOAKED AND CHAINED, WE SOUGHT TO PREVENT ITS SPIRIT FROM ESCAPE IN AN AFTERLIFE.
HAD WE NOT FELT BOUND BY OUR OWN BURIAL CUSTOMS, AND SIMPLY DESTROYED THE BODY...
...PERHAPS IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RETURN.

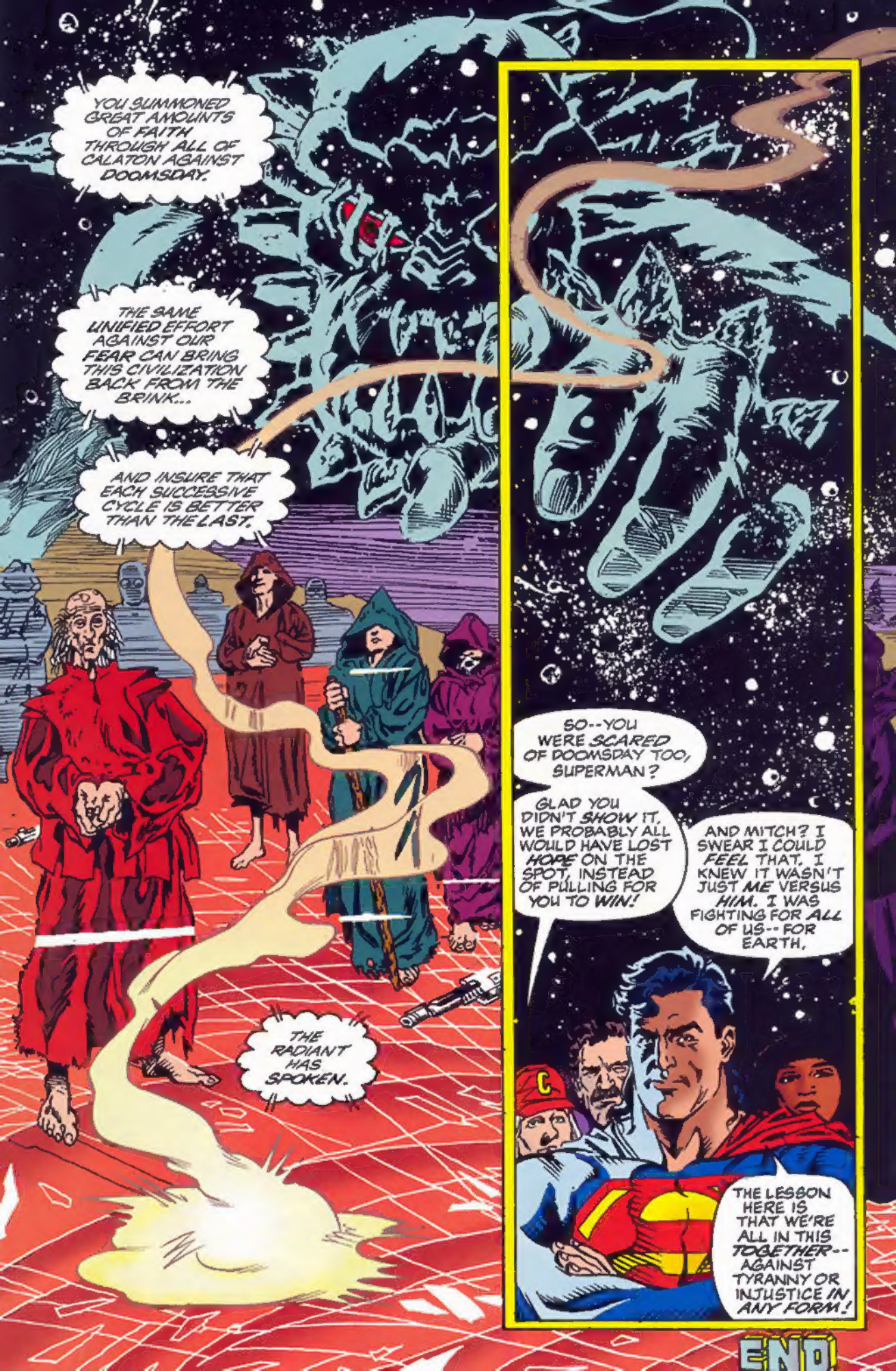

"BUT RETURN IT DID, UNBELIEVABLY, AGAIN COMBATING THE RADIANT...

"...THOUGH BY NOW, THE CREATURE HAD ADAPTED TO RADIANT'S SPECIFIC ENERGY SIGNATURE, AND EFFORTLESSLY RENT HIM IN TWO!
"WITH A GREAT THUNDERING FROM THE SKIES, BOTH HALVES OF RADIANT REFORMED TO DO BATTLE WITH THE DOOMSDAY...
"ALL THREE WERE VAPORIZED IN THE BLINDING FLASH THAT DESTROYED OUR LONE SOURCE OF ENERGY--OUR POWER STATIONS.!*"
*A FAST AND LOOSE TELLING OF THE EVENTS FOUND IN THE SUPERMAN-DOOMSDAY TRADE PAPERBACK, ON SALE NOW!

THE OFFICIAL HISTORIANS CLAIM DIFFERENTLY, BUT I KNOW THIS TELLING TO BE TRUE. PRAISE RADIANT, WE ARE SHOWN THE WAY!
TOO LONG, WE HAVE ALLOWED SCIENCE TO BE OUR SALVATION, BUT NOW IS THE TIME TO LOOK INWARD, TOWARD OUR OWN SOULS.
THE SPIRITS OF OUR ROYALS LIVE ON, WITHIN US, AND THEIR SACRIFICE WILL BE OUR STRENGTH, OUR WAY OF COPING...
...WITH THE CATASTROPHIC CHANGES WROUGHT UPON ALL OF CALATON.
PRAISE THE RADIANT!
RETURN TO THE TOWERS. THIS GATHERING IS NOT ALLOWED, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF THE SCIENCE COUNCIL.
REFUSAL TO DISPERSE WILL BE CONSIDERED GROUNDS FOR SEDITION.
THE VERY ATMOSPHERE IS UNFIT FOR BREATHING.
THE SICKNESS IS ALREADY UPON US--WHAT MORE CAN IT DO BUT HELP RELEASE US FROM THIS AGONY?
WE BOTHER NO ONE, SOLDIER. LOWER YOUR WEAPONS AND LEAVE US BE. LET US BASK IN THE WARMTH OF THE MIGHTY RADIANT'S GLOW.
THE SICKNESS HAS ADDLED YOUR MIND--THE RADIANT IS LONG GONE, AS ARE THE SPIRITS OF THE MONARCHY.


WE ARE PREPARED TO FIRE ON YOU AND YOUR GROUP. DISPERSE--NOW!
THE RADIANT WAS A CONSTRUCT, YES--BUT IT WAS ALSO AN IDEAL. THE ROYALS BELIEVED IN IT, AS DO WE.
YOU THINK US UNARMED, BUT WE ARE NOT. THIS CAN CUT THE FABRIC OF YOUR PROTECTIVE GARMENT, SOLDIER.
ARE YOU WILLING TO RISK EXPOSURE TO THIS POISONED ATMOSPHERE FOR YOUR PRINCIPLES?
STAY--STAY BACK!
THAT GLOW--WHERE'S IT COMING FROM?
THE RADIANT TAUGHT US THAT MANY COULD BE AS ONE, TO OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE. WE ARE ONE--ONE WITH THE RADIANT!


SOME KIND OF TRICK?
THIS IS NO RUSE, MAN OF WAR...
THE RADIANT --HE SPEAKS!
YOU MUST WORK TOGETHER, TO RESTORE ORDER, NOT FOR YOURSELVES, BUT FOR THE GENERATIONS TO FOLLOW.
PRAISE RADIANT!
WORSHIP ME NOT AS A GOD, MY FELLOWS. I AM MERELY A SERVANT OF THIS PLANET LIKE YOU.
THE LESSON OF THE ROYALS IS NOT LOST ON THESE TORTURED ONES WHO BRAVED PERSONAL RISK TO SET FOOT HERE, IN TRIBUTE.
IN REACHING OUT, THEY TOOK THE DYING EMBER THAT WAS THE RADIANT, AND FANNED THE FLAMES...
...PULLING ME BACK FROM THE BRINK OF NOTHINGNESS, TO OFFER YOU THIS LAST ADVICE...
...AS WE BECAME ONE TO DENY DOOMSDAY, YOU TOO, MUST JOIN TOGETHER TO DENY CHAOS.


YOU SUMMONED GREAT AMOUNTS OF FAITH THROUGH ALL OF CALATON AGAINST DOOMSDAY.
THE SAME UNIFIED EFFORT AGAINST OUR FEAR CAN BRING THIS CIVILIZATION BACK FROM THE BRINK...
AND INSURE THAT EACH SUCCESSIVE CYCLE IS BETTER THAN THE LAST.
THE RADIANT HAS SPOKEN.
SO--YOU WERE SCARED OF DOOMSDAY TOO, SUPERMAN?
GLAD YOU DIDN'T SHOW IT. WE PROBABLY ALL WOULD HAVE LOST HOPE ON THE SPOT, INSTEAD OF PULLING FOR YOU TO WIN!
AND MITCH? I SWEAR I COULD FEEL THAT. I KNEW IT WASN'T JUST ME VERSUS HIM. I WAS FIGHTING FOR ALL OF US-- FOR EARTH.
THE LESSON HERE IS THAT WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER-- AGAINST TYRANNY OR INJUSTICE IN ANY FORM!
END